# Interview with Ambassador Edward Gabriel

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

AMBASSADOR EDWARD GABRIEL

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

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*Q: Today is the 19th of December 2005. This is an interview with Ambassador Edward Gabriel. This is being done on behalf of the Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. You go by Ed. Is that right?*

GABRIEL: I go by Ed. Thank you.

*Q: When and where were you born?*

GABRIEL: I was born in Olean, in western New York, south of Buffalo. St. Bonaventure University is also in Olean. It's a small town, about 12,000-15,000 people, located in the Allegheny Mountains. I was born on March 1, 1950. I lived in Olean until I was 18, when I went to Gannon College.

*Q: I'm interviewing a man whose name escapes me right now who was teaching ROTC (Reserve Officers' Training Corps) at St. Bonaventure's at one point.*

GABRIEL: I've heard of a couple of ROTC instructors from St. Bonaventure who are in prominent positions today.

*Q: He does crisis management.*

GABRIEL: I'd love to know his name. Perhaps in the next interview you could give his name and let me know. I didn't go to St. Bona's, but I do know a number of people there.

*Q: Tell me a little about your family. On your father's side, who were the Gabriels?*

GABRIEL: My father and mother both have their ethnic roots in Lebanon. My father came here in 1910 as a ten-year-old, so I'm first generation on his side. His real name was Michel (Michael) John Gabriel Bishelany. At Ellis Island the name Bishelany was removed and my father then became Michael John Gabriel. Our last name changed at this point. Actually, he came with his father, and so the whole family's name was then changed, but in Lebanon my grandfather was John Gabriel Bishelany.

*Q: Do you know where the Bishelanys... What were they up to and where did they come from?*

GABRIEL: Yes. The Bishelanys were from Salima, Lebanon, which is in the Metn area of Lebanon, east of Beirut, in an area occupied by people of the Maronite and Druze religions. They have been there for more than 500 years. Before that they were from the Bishel, named after the area where the Bishelany family was originally from, which is further north in Lebanon. I know little about that area or our history there. Our family roots are Phoenician, and if you believe the National Geographic, Phoenicians are Canaanites. I would hate to go further in my history than that!

*Q: What were the Bishelanys up to?*

GABRIEL: Good point. The Bishelanys in Salima were known for their silk production. The first person to come to the U.S. (United States) from Lebanon was a Bishelany, a distant relative. He came to America in about 1854, settling in Boston. He lived there about two

years, then died, I believe, of pneumonia. My grandfather was an accountant, and he traveled extensively to France and other places in the Mediterranean region.

*Q: Your grandfather was the accountant.*

GABRIEL: Yes.

*Q: Did you know your grandfather?*

GABRIEL: No. Only one grandparent was alive when I was born. He was my grandfather on my mother's side.

*Q: What did your father do?*

GABRIEL: My father came with his father and two sisters in 1910 from Lebanon. His mother died right after he was born, so his older sister raised him. I believe his mother's name was Asma. He had two older brothers, so there were five all together. The older brothers had come to the United States at an earlier date on a previous trip with their father. The whole family immigrated to the United States in several waves over about ten years, with my dad being the last to come in 1910. They ended up in a little town in Pennsylvania called Eldred, which is not far from Olean, New York. The children became quite prosperoueveryone but my father.

*Q: What were they doing?*

GABRIEL: They went into typical businesses for Lebanese at the time. My father's siblings established corner grocery stores and small clothing stores. His oldest brother, Louie, and their children were very successful in the clothing business. Two of Louie's children became doctors, having gone to Notre Dame medical school. The second brother, George, had two sons, John and Tom. John lived in Olean during my early years and then moved to New Jersey. He had several children. I've lost touch with them. Tom had three children. Two, Tom and Dave, still live in Olean, and their sister, Diane, lives in Houston,

Texas. Tom, my cousin and George's son, followed in his Lebanese heritage opening Olean's only music store, which had the area's first sound booth, in order to listen to songs and albums. John, in his spare time (I do not know what his profession was) played the drums in a local band and actually made bows and arrows for sale and display.

My father's two sisters, Famia Abdo and Spidy Mansour, had 14 children between them. Spidy had six children: Haleem, Ester, Selma, Mary, Sam and John. They lived in various parts of western New York, except for Sammy, who lived his adult life in Miami, being the head bartender at the Fountain Blue Hotel. There was about 20 years' difference between Spidy and my father, so not only did she raise him, but it is also widely stated in our family that Spidy was more like his mother than a sister. Haleem went into the restaurant business, and her youngest son, John, became a lifelong teacher in one of our local area high schools. Mary, Ester and Selma were educated but I only knew them when they were older and were raising their children.

My father's other sister, my Aunt Famia, settled in Danbury, Connecticut and had eight children: Aileen Shaheen, Edna Michaels, Ester Define, Marsha Taylor, Albert Rishdan, Lou Lou Montessi, Mary Abdo and John Rishdan. Those eight children had more than 50 offspring, mostly still living in the Danbury, Connecticut area. The most famous of those offspring is Bishop Robert Shaheen, who is the head of the Maronite Church in America today. I soon discovered that although becoming an ambassador is an impressive and very high honor, in my family a bishop trumps an ambassador. We were driven by our Catholic religion of the Maronite rite. As with any Catholic family, to have a family member become a priest is not only an honor, but a grace from God. To have that priest become a bishop is an honor bigger than life. The whole family revolves around the bishop and his schedule and his events. It's amazing to think that 100 years after our family came to America, five generations of the Bishelany family still come together at times when Bishop Bob (as we call him) calls us to a wedding, a holiday event or more likely lately, a funeral. Bishop Bob was the first U.S.-born American to be ordained in the U.S. in the Maronite

rite of the Catholic Church, and the first American-born bishop and head of the Maronite Church in the U.S.

My father, unfortunately, did not do well economically. He was the youngest of his family by many years. He was 45 years old when he married my mother, who was 38 at the time, and still older when I was born, 50 years old. He was more the age of a grandfather. He tried several professions, driving a taxi cab driver in Olean in the last years of his life.

I'll tell you a funny story. I don't know if you've ever seen Bluebird Bus around Washington. They've kind of died off in recent years, but they were a huge conglomerate, a regional bus company in America. The company was started by an Italian immigrant, Joe Magnano, who settled in Olean.

*Q: I've seen them. In fact, the government hired them.*

GABRIEL: Well, they actually got started as a small cab company. During the Depression, Joe approached my father with the proposition that he would buy a car and he and my dad would establish a cab company. Joe suggested he would work days and my dad nights. He further thought that if business went well they would buy another car and build a company from there. My father thought that being a cab driver was beneath his status and had dreams of grander things. Well, Joe Magnano ended up with Bluebird Bus Company, and my father ended up working for him as a cab driver, and that's what he did most of his professional life after WWII. He also tried to start a dry goods store and he worked as a laborer on bridge construction and in a factory at Dresser Industries (then called Clark Brothers). He passed away when I was seven. He had a big heart and taught me a lot about tolerance and diversity. He was also a very funny man who could make anyone laugh at any time. My mother worked as a sales clerk in a department store, W. T. Grant'it was like a Kresge's or a K-Mart.

Two great memories of my dad involve a Seneca Indian and his reaction to a man who used the word “nigger” in our home. My father often took me to the Seneca Indian

Nation, about twenty miles from Olean, to visit with an old Indian who lived in a teepee. I remember my father often commenting that the “white man” brought disease and alcoholism to the American Indian and that until we arrived they had a good way of life and were a prosperous people. One day he invited the Indian to come home for dinner, which he did. My mother was quite shocked when my dad showed up with an old man traditionally dressed, who spoke little or no English. My father forgot to tell the Indian's family he was taking him to our home and we found out later that night that the whole Seneca Nation was mobilized to go looking for their elder.

The other memory is my father telling a neighbor to leave his house and never enter it again for using the word “nigger.” These two memories, though two is only a very few, left indelible marks on me.

*Q: Let's talk about on your mother's side. Where did they come from?*

GABRIEL: My mother's family originated three miles from Salima, in a town called Hasbya el-Metn. My grandparents on my mother's side came to the U.S. in 1895. My mother was born in 1907 in Olean, and she married my dad at the end of World War II when he came home from the war. By the way, my father lied about his age twice. He lied about his age to get into World War I because he was too young, and he lied about his age again to get into World War II because he was too old.

*Q: What did he do in the war?*

GABRIEL: It is my understanding that in World War I he volunteered to go into the Navy. I don't know much about this experience, but I think his older brother “bought” him out after some time, as he was too young when he entered and didn't realize what he was getting himself into. In World War II he was assigned to Panama. He was 45 years old when he came out. He may have been only to Panama in WWII, but he was as proud as anyone who served in the war. Several letters to my mom illustrate his patriotism and how proud he was to be serving his country. I think it was the most satisfying profession of his entire

life. He and my mother got married in 1945. My mother died in 1989 when I was 39. She lived her whole life in Olean.

*Q: Basically, she was a homemaker?*

GABRIEL: No. She actually ran the store that my father started and was quite remarkable at it, until she was forced to close it in the early '50s. She then went to work at W. T. Grants and worked there for the rest of her professional life until she retired in the 1980s I believe. She had no choice but to work. My father died when I was seven, and he had nothing. A cab driver who dies at the age of 5you can imagine how little he had, so my mom was forced to work. I also went to work when I was ten years old, peddling papers. I lied about my age since the minimum age at the time for peddling papers was 11.

My mother was my best friend in my life. We were very close. She taught me most of life's lessons: the importance of educatioshe never doubted that my sister and I would be the first in our families to go to college; that to get a good job and work hard was part of the American dream; and, the love of humor is the one of life's most important lessons.

*Q: I want to come back, but one thing: Something as I've done these oral histories, I never realized before, and that is the Lebanese community. Talk about groups in Africa. Every time I talk to somebody who served in Africa, they talk about the Lebanese merchants there, and then you talk about Latin America. What is there? Is there a mercantile gene or something? Have you ever thought...*

GABRIEL: The Lebanese never found a street corner they didn't like. They didn't just see a street corner. They saw the future site of a corner grocery or a clothing store, or a restaurant. The joke I always teland I told this to President Assad of Syria over a year ago this September when he was complaining about the Lebanese. I said to him, “Two Lebanese were talking to each other. One asked the other, 'How much is two and two?'

The other said, 'Am I buying or selling?'" That's the story about the Lebanese! They're very mercantile. They're Phoenicians, and the Phoenicians were traders.

*Q: Is there a mercantile gene in your body?*

GABRIEL: Yes! I combined my love for public policy with my interest in being an entrepreneur. I had my own public affairs companies during most of my professional life. During this career I was able to be a businessman as well as practice the public policy and public affairs professions. Math, business and economics come easily for me.

*Q: In a way, you feel that you could have been comfortable doing that?*

GABRIEL: Oh, yes. As you can see during my professional life, a good part of it was owning my own businesses, or starting up non-profit organizations. There were profit and loss statements, employee welfare and human resource questions, and marketing and new sales to worry about. At the same time, the product was public policies and public affairs strategies, which I had a passion for.

*Q: It's really a remarkable history, isn't it?*

GABRIEL: It's amazing that we can go so far back into Lebanese history. Most Lebanese will tell you they are Phoenicians. At least, most Christian Lebanese will say that. As you may know, according to a National Geographic study, the Phoenicians, the Lebanese - DNA-wise - are Phoenicians, but there's no difference between them and Arabs. A lot of Lebanese will tell you they're not Arab. Well, DNA proves otherwise. The study goes on to say that before they were called Lebanese and Phoenicians, they were actually Canaanites.

*Q: You mention the Maronite Church. How Maronite were you, and would you talk a little about...*

GABRIEL: It is difficult for me to distinguish describing my Lebanese roots and culture without describing my Catholic, Maronite roots. For me, they are integrally linked. The Catholic Maronite Church was a very big part of my growing up. I lived a block away from the churctypical ethnic neighborhoods in upstate New York were clustered around their own church. Olean, which was 80% Catholic when I was growing up, had a population of less than 20,000 people and a Catholic church in every ethnic neighborhooItalian, Polish, Irish, Lebanese and German. The Mass of the Maronite rite was more like the Eastern Orthodox Mass, even though Maronites are part of the Roman Catholic Church. But the Mass itself looked more like a High Mass in Latin, with a lot of incense.

*Q: A lot of singing?*

GABRIEL: Yes, but it sounded more like Jewish canting. The Mass is said in Syriac, the language of Christ. Syriac is a sub-dialect of Aramaic. We altar boys actually served the Mass in Syriac. With the change to the vernacular language, around 1964 under Pope John XXIII, everything was then said in the vernacular, in our case, English.

*Q: In your experience was there any sort of gap between what we call the Roman Catholic Church and the Maronite Church?*

GABRIEL: No. I never felt any difference because the diocese of Buffalo pretty much controlled certain parameters of what St. Joe's Maronite church could do, although there was also another, separate bishop who was responsible for the Maronites in the U.S., and that bishop reported directly to the Pope. In management terminology, we'd call this matrix management, with two separate authorities having jurisdiction over different competences. There is also a cardinal in charge of the Maronites, the patriarch of the Maronite Church.

All of the ethnic churches had their own elementary schools and their own sports league, which we all participated in. But there was only one Catholic high school in Olean, Archbishop Walsh, which the majority of us ended up in together. At that point we shed

our ethnic grade school colors and the competition among ourselves and joined as one at a new school that competed with schools in the greater western New York area, beyond Olean.

One interesting note is that our class basketball teaclass of 1968 - was one of the best in New York State. In our senior year we made it to the finals of the Manhattan Cup, against Canisius High School of Buffalo. Tim Russert, the famous National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) anchor and reporter, in his senior year, was a cheerleader for Canisius. I was one of Walsh's “unofficial” cheerleaders. By the way, we won, the only time in Walsh's history to ever win the Manhattan Cup.

Q: Growing up in Olean, what was the town like? GABRIEL: The City is in a valley surrounded by rolling mountains with the Allegany River passing through it. In each season of the year the back drop to your daily life was this amazing changing vista. And, from wherever you were in the City, you had a sense that you were not far away from the woods and the water. The City itself was charming then. It still is, but in the 1950's there was a larger population and greater wealth than now. Olean was very prosperous at one time, due to the discovery of oil and gas in the area in the late 1800s and early 1900s. During my youth, Olean's downtown was the shopping Center for the region. From dawn to late at night it bustled with an energy that was just remarkable. During the Christmas Season especially it was a wonderland. Over the wide long main street they strung colorful lights, and thousands of shoppers thronged its stores from miles around. There were many discrete neighborhoods in Olean and each had at least one church and at least one neighborhood grocery store. In our neighborhood, we had Simon's grocery. I'm still close to the owner's daughter, Wardia. Our mothers were best of friends and our grandparents came from the same villages in Lebanon. I can say that for all of my Lebanese American friends I grew up with. It was the post World War II era and looking back it was a highly patriotic time with a lot of respect for local and national leaders. The town was very safe, and the police were mostly on foot. For whatever reasons, people in the town felt a real connection to the community and to one another. Small town America, a place where we

ranged beyond our neighborhood without fear; where we could go caroling for mission donations and people would open their doors, where in the worst winter weather, we would be sledding on the high school hill, across the street from my house. It was a great place to grow up.

The winters are famous as well, receiving the record amounts of snow that the Buffalo area is renowned for. We used to sled on the hill across the street on the side of the High School. It was the best sledding in the neighborhood. We would make a jump to sled over until the rail on my sled finally broke on one particular jump we made one winter. When I was about 8 years old I found a very old pair of skis in my Aunt's basement, with simple leather straps. I took them across the street and had a contest with myself to see if I could go down the hill 100 times straight (no turns/after all how can one turn with leather straps?) without falling. When I fell on my 99th time, I finally went home and announced I had skied down the hill 100 times. In 1959 a real ski resort opened 8 miles from our home on the Five Mile Road outside of Allegany, Grosstal. It was owned by two dairy farmers. One, the Eatons, who I went to school with at St. Bona's until second grade, owed the mountain with a vertical drop of 800 feet. The other family, Yehl, inherited money from Switzerland, which they took out as ski machines and equipment. I started skiing there immediately and thus began a passion for life, which I still do every year, about 15-20 days each year, now skiing in Colorado and Wyoming. I remember often hitchhiking there with my skis, boots and poles, never having a problem getting a ride.

*Q: What were the industries there?*

GABRIEL: The biggest industry was Dresser Industries, which was bought by Halliburton about ten years ago. Dresser Industries was started in Olean as an oil and gas equipment and services manufacturer.

*Q: Dresser did what?*

GABRIEL: Dresser built large compressors, pipeline equipment and oil equipment supplies to service the oil boom years at the turn of the 20th century. Famous oil towns such as Titusville and Bradford, Pennsylvania are nearby. The first discovery of gas in the United States was on the outskirts of Olean.

*Q: That's where oil started in America.*

GABRIEL: There's a history of oil being first found in this region of the country, and this company, Dresser, became the biggest oil equipment employer. Eventually they moved their headquarters to Houston. There were also other small manufacturers. Some of the names I forget now. St. Bonaventure University, of course, is still a big part of Olean. Dresser and St. Bona define the work base of Olean, along with a dozen small manufacturers, such as American Olean tile, Alcas Cutlery, Hi-Sol and others.

*Q: You were in what is known as the “snow belt,” that New York snow belt.*

GABRIEL: Yes. The western New York snow belt.

*Q: What about growing up there as a kid? Sounds like you could ride your bike everywhere.*

GABRIEL: Oh, yes. Bike riding was one of my favorite pastimes. It was an expression of freedom for a young person like me. We couldn't afford a car in my family so the bike became an important means of extending my reach in the world beyond my neighborhood and Olean. I'd get on my bike, take my fishing pole and go for miles. The Alleghany River came right through Olean, so you'd go down there for muskie and pike. I finally found a place called Dodge Creek when I was a kid. I would bike ten, fifteen miles. I was about eight or nine years old. This creek was stocked with rainbow trout, which was my favorite thing to fish for.

In Olean you could go out at all hours of the night, and if the police picked you up for making too much noise, the worst they would do was bring you home. Our parents turned out to be tougher than the police when they were wakened in the middle of the night by the local police. Olean was that kind of town. When I was 15 and a half years old I bought my first car with my own money and drove it up and down the driveway until I was 16, when I could get my driver's permit.

*Q: A place you didn't lock your door or anything like that.*

GABRIEL: That's right. We never locked our doors.

*Q: How big was your family?*

GABRIEL: My immediate family is just my sister and I. My sister, Mary, who is four years older, lives in Warrenton, Virginia, is married to a wonderful brother in law, Uli Schlegel, and has two sons: Robby lives in Los Angeles, and Eric lives in Culpepper, Virginia. My mother had two sisters. One sister, Helen, moved to Mississippi and had three children: Michael, Theresa and Emile. The other sister, Dorothy, stayed in Olean on the same street as my mother, three doors away. She had three children: Donna, Paul and Marcia. Those children now live in Canada, Tennessee, and Virginia. They in turn now have children who I remain in touch with. I described my father's side of the family earlier. I don't know how many first cousins I had, but my sister and I are the youngest first cousins on both my mother and father's side, and by several decades on my father's side. There are eight or nine of us still remaining on my father's side and six on my mother's side.

*Q: What was home life like?*

GABRIEL: Very nurturing, very Catholic, very close-knit. Our entire family lived on the same street. My grandfather lived up the street, three houses away, with my aunt. We ate Arabic food for the most part. My mom was always in the kitchen cooking whenever she wasn't at work. My sister, Mary, and I each had our own chores. I had to mop floors and

take out the garbage and weed the garden. The garden was a big part of growing up and it was important to my mother as it provided cheap food. Each spring I had to spade the garden and rake it to plant. We had Lebanese squash, tomatoes, green beans, lettuce and onions, among other things. One year I planted corn, as I had always wanted to. I think we ended up with six ears that year. Gardening was a real chore, and I haven't missed it since.

We had a two bedroom apartment, so my sister got her own room and I slept in twin beds with my mom until Mary left for college and I took her room. That didn't last long. In my sophomore year of high school, our apartment house was condemned for urban renewal and we bought a three bedroom home a mile away. We used as a downpayment the $2000 my mom got from her portion of the proceeds from the condemnation and subsequent buying of the apartment house by the city. I paid the monthly mortgage of $75 from the jobs I held until we eventually sold it and my mother moved to a retirement apartment.

When women would come by to visit, they usually visited in the kitchen with my mother, rolling grape leaves together, or making baklava, or yogurt or cheese or some other ethnic dish. We had statue of our Lady of Hope at our doorway to our apartment and kept a house key under it. The house was only locked when we weren't home.

Our house was situated so that the front door faced Third Street and the Church, and the back door faced Whitney Avenue, where a large part of the Lebanese and black communities lived. So if you wanted to go to Whitney Avenue from the church or Third Street, there were two ways. One way was through our house. The other way was to walk four blocks around three streets, since there were homes in the way for blocks before one could get to Whitney Avenue. When we weren't home, the neighborhood knew where the key was and would use it to let themselves through the house to get to Whitney. When we were home, people of the neighborhood would simply knock, come in and say hello and say, “We're just coming through.” Sometimes they would visit.

Our park, Cedar Park, was on Whitney Avenue. We played baseball there, or football in front of the public high school, which happened to be on Third Street in front of our house. We also had a Catholic basketball league and all the regional elementary schools played each other. Years later, we would all be at the same high school, and having played basketball with one another, knew each other as soon as we arrived to high school.

We were never allowed to have Coke or Pepsi in the house, as my mom said it was not good for us. I remember my aunt up the street had Pepsi by the case, so we'd often go up there to mooch a Pepsi every once in a while. There were 11 houses on one side of our block of Third Street. Ten of those houses were Lebanese families and one was Italian. On the other side of the street was the public high school that my sister went to. I hitchhiked to the Catholic school about two miles away until I got a car in my sophomore year.

I grew up with a bunch of boys and girls that I'm still close to. About a dozen of us have remained close friends since we were three and four years old. Five of us went to college together, and we remain close to one another to this day. As a matter of fact, I saw a group of them last weekend, Goose (Ronnie) Hamed, Buck (Kevin) O'Connell, Dea (Wardia) Simon Hart, Louie Gicale, Joe Tierney, Libby Miers Smith, Danny Metzler, Steve Stayer, Bobby Abdo, Bill Smith, Hoda (Steve) Piehota, and several more friends, who I often see on a regular basis.

Working part time jobs and our education were important parts of our early years. We all worked part time and we all went to school with the expectation we were all going to college. Most of us would be the first in our family to do so.

*Q: Was it a Maronite group?*

GABRIEL: No, it was a mix of people, as you can tell from the names I mentioned. Remember I mentioned earlier, when we went on to high school we went beyond our ethnic connections. We were Italian, Irish, and Lebanese. The common factor was that

we were all Catholics. Even in grade school, many non-Lebanese went to our elementary school.

*Q: I've talked with some people who grew up in one neighborhood, and whatever they were they said that it wasn't until they were 18 or so they realized there were other people with other religions, other ethnic backgrounds.*

GABRIEL: Being Lebanese, we were viewed somewhat differently. I remember when I was little, walking down the street, people would call me names. They'd call me “Nigger,” “Turk,” “Jew,” and “Camel Jockey.” Those were the four names that I could remember. It was because some people didn't know better, and that's the way they looked at people that looked liked us in a small town like Olean. With our looks, there was a commonality with the Jews in our town. The Olean Jews had their own synagogue, but our church was somewhat different from the other Catholic churches. My father felt strongly about the issue of tolerance among different peoples and the equality of mankind. He would never let the “N” word be said in our house. If somebody said it, he threw them out of the house. That is one of he biggest impressions I have of him as a child.

*Q: I take it particularly in those days, the Irish and the Italian, but particularly the Irish side really brought a lot of... I lived for a while in Boston...*

GABRIEL: My wife's from Boston. She's a “Southie,” Kathleen Mary Linehan.

*Q: ...and the Boston Irish. They brought a lot of stuff over. They're not the greatest stuff from Ireland as far as prejudices go.*

GABRIEL: As I mentioned earlier, my father befriended American Indians because there's a reservation—the Seneca Reservation—near there. He would bring them home for dinner. He was a big advocate for the American Indian and Black people, and he felt that the less fortunate were the ones that were mistreated in America. My father had strong political and social feelings towards the less fortunate. I can remember him on many a

night writing to his congressman about any issue he cared about. My mother, on the other hand, was satisfied to be the “hard worker” in the family, and during my father's life and after, she spent her entire life dedicated to work and her children.

*Q: You're saying that you started a paper route when you were ten. What other types of work were you doing?*

GABRIEL: I had great jobs. I started off as a paper boy.

*Q: What paper?*

GABRIEL: It was a weekly called The Olean News. Recently, my grade school buddy, Kevin O'Connell (Buck), and I discovered that we had social security numbers just one number apart, mine ending in 4, his ending in 3. We soon remembered that we went down to the social security office on the same day together in order to get jobs peddling papers. At the age of 11, I kept my paper route, but got another job walking an elderly man named Hartley Pratt, who had had a stroke and needed to be walked every day. I got paid 50 cents a day for walking him.

Another interesting notyears later I was in Washington pursuing my professional dreams. I met the Secretary of the Senate under Majority Leader Senator Robert Byrd. His name is David Pratt, and he eventually informed me that he is from western New York. “Where in western New York?” I said, “I'm from Olean,” and he explains that he's from Hamburg in Western NY. He then informed me that he has a relative there, a great uncle, Hartley Pratt. I told him that I used to walk this Mr. Pratt. What a small world!

Anyway, between walking Mr. Pratt and the paper route I made about $4 per week, enough to indulge my passion, skiing, every couple of weeks. In those days ski rental was $3 per day and the lift ticket was the same.

When I was 11 years old I also became a boy scout, rising to the rank of Life before I discovered girls and quit. I only needed two more merit badges, swimming and lifesaving , to become an Eagle when I quit.

When I was 14, I could get my work permit, so I became a shoe shine boy in my uncle's shoe shop. He had a shoe repair shop, and I set up the shoe stand. My two buddies, Buck O'Connell and Reggie Spillar, joined me at the three-person stand and we worked in that business for three years together. All through high school we had a shoe shine business, and I made a lot of money for our age. I was making maybe $30, $40 a week. Reggie made a sign that hung over the stand: “The sun shines east, the sun shines west, but you know where the shines are best.”

As I mentioned earlier, I bought a car when I was 15. I couldn't drive until I was 16, but I bought it, put it in the driveway, and went up and down the driveway waiting till I could drive. Then I got special permission from the police at 16 to use the car at night because I shined shoes past daylight in the winter hours. Who got their shoes shined? Police, lawyers and judges. Here I was already, getting special treatment from these guys because I was their shoe shine boy. I rarely got a traffic ticket that I couldn't get fixed by one of the guys on my shoe shine stand. But the most famous person on my shoe shine stand was Bob Lanier. Do you know who he is?

*Q: No.*

GABRIEL: Bob Lanier was a famous basketball player. He played at St. Bonaventure University and then went on to the Detroit Pistons, where he had a remarkable career. His basketball sneakers are in the Hall of Fame because he had the biggest feet in the NBA: size 22. I can claim that I was Bob Lanier's shoe shine boy.

*Q: How was it shining size 22 shoes?*

GABRIEL: Well, it wasn't profitable, I'll tell you that, since shines were only 25 cents, but we never charged him anyway. We had offered him a card of ten free shines in order to get him on the stand so we could market the fact that we were his shoe shine boys.

The summer after I graduated from high school I was a taxi cab driver for most of the summer.

*Q: That was you father's profession.*

GABRIEL: Yes, and well, my mother freaked. All she had was visions of me [laughter] becoming a taxi cab driver like my dad. Really, she said, “I don't want you to do this because you just graduated from high school. You're going to college, but I don't trust this.” I said, “Don't worry.” The rest of my college summers, I worked in construction. I joined the Laborers Union, Local 621, and became a laborer on road construction. That's where I made really big money. I put myself through college and paid the monthly mortgage payments on a house my mother, sister and I purchased when I was a sophomore in high school. In the late '60s and early '70s, I was making more than $5 an hour, nearly $6 an hour, if my memory serves me right. This was very big money in those days.

I owe a lot to the man who hired me, Ed Stayer, the father of my buddy, Steve Stayer. He gave me a chance, one in a thousand, really, because I think he felt sorry for my economic plight. But more than the money, he taught me what hard work was really like. I never worked so hard in my life. The first summer, I was on a 90-pound jackhammer for eight hours a day. He set me on a course that helped me for the rest of my life. He made me realize that with hard work you could achieve much. He also made me realize that I had absolutely no interest in doing that kind of work the rest of my life, so this work ethic that Ed instilled was used in my studies, as I was determined to finish school and get a good job.

*Q: Let's talk about school. Starting with elementary school, how did you take to school?*

GABRIEL: I took to school OK. I went to St. Joseph's elementary school in second grade after switching from St. Bonaventure in Allegany, New York, where we lived, three miles away from Olean. I had this big disruption when I was in second gradmy father died. I don't think it affected my grades, but it affected me, I'm sure, psychologically. I can't describe how greatly an event like this affects a person's life. Maybe you've had similar experiences. My mother had to sell the store and the apartment over the store that we lived in, at 97 or 99 Main St. in Allegany, to pay for bills following the death of my father. We then moved to Olean to an apartment that my grandfather left to his three children, three doors away from my Aunt Dorothy. It was a block away from St. Joseph's church and school, the Lebanese church.

I was always in the top ten percent of my class in grade school and high school. I was probably a B+/A student. High school was a wonderful time for me. My memories of high school socially, academically, and otherwise are wonderful. As I mentioned, I went to Archbishop Walsh High School. We were taught by Franciscan nuns in grade school and Franciscan friars in high school.

*Q: The Franciscan grade school, was this run by nuns?*

GABRIEL: It was run by Franciscan nuns. Third Order of Franciscan Sisters.

*Q: There are all sorts of stories about nuns. How did you find this?*

GABRIEL: Well, I was a bad kid. I was pretty bad. Me and my buddy Kevin, or Buck as he is known, were among the most difficult students, and by the way we're still best of friends. I saw him last weekend. I remember in sixth grade we were so bad the nuns put us on permanent detention. I don't think it was for one particular thing. I think at one point the “straw broke the camel's back” and the nuns took an extreme step. The nuns would hit us on the hands with a ruler. Corporal punishment was just a normal part of going to school

when I was growing up. When I look back on it, I think one or two of the priests in high school were a little off their rockers. When you think about the punishment, hitting you in the face in high school and those kinds of things, it was very strange.

When I say we were bad, I should qualify it. We were mischievous and did things that bordered on funny or tipped over to bad. We never did anything that would have gotten us kicked out of school or that would hurt anyone.

*Q: Were you much of a reader?*

GABRIEL: I wasn't, and it affected me. I really learned to read in college. I wasn't great. I got nearly 700 or on my SATs in math, but barely broke 400 in English.

*Q: Those Lebanese genes came out!*

GABRIEL: I remember taking remedial reading at the convent in grade school. By the way, the home of the Franciscan nuns is in Olean, New York, as is the seminary for the Franciscan priests.

*Q: Is that part of St. Bonaventure's?*

GABRIEL: They're nearly all in the same land complex in Allegany, New York, which is right on the border of Olean. I remember taking remedial reading there, and then when I went to college they wanted to give me a prep course in English. I didn't understand why all my other buddies had the exact same classes and I didn't, so I changed it to the regular English class. I think that was in reaction to my SAT scores. That's when I decided to go into mechanical engineering, but I quit two weeks later and switched to economics and accounting.

*Q: Where did you go to college?*

GABRIEL: Gannon University. And by the way, I was their winter commencement speaker last week.

*Q: Where is Gannon?*

GABRIEL: Erie, Pennsylvania, about two hours from Olean. Early on at Gannon, I decided I want to be a lawyer. Lawyering seemed very interesting to me. I looked at business and economics as solid pre-law courses. I also realized that I was going to have to read if I was ever going to score high enough on the LSATs. That's when I really started putting emphasis on reading and reading a lot. It helped change my life, as I began to indulge in books on politics, economics and history.

*Q: In high school, what was the social life like? Was it a mixed school, or was it all boys?*

GABRIEL: It was mixed in both elementary and high school.

*Q: Did one ever date a non-Catholic girl?*

GABRIEL: There weren't any around that I remembered. It was kind of weird. I do know that when I was getting married, my mother didn't care if the woman was not white, if she was 20 years older than me, if she had kids, nothing...as long as she was Catholic! I do remember that. I can tell you some funny stories of women that I was dating that I would bring home for the weekend. Nothing phased my mother except that she wanted me to get married in the Catholic church. I dated many non-Catholics after leaving Olean.

*Q: I'm about 22 years older than you...*

GABRIEL: My God. You're kidding!

*Q: Uh-huh. I remember with my mother, my father wasn't there, but the general feeling was you could date anyone you want as long as she's not Catholic because if she's Catholic, your children will be brought up as Catholics.*

GABRIEL: And what were you?

*Q: Episcopalian. I mean, these things counted for so much for a long time, and all of a sudden this has almost disappeared. My son is married to a Catholic, his best friend who is Jewish is married to a Protestant. It's a different world, but at one time it was a very important thing.*

GABRIEL: I remember only a few lessons from my father because he died when I was so young. One of the lessons I remember discussing was Lebanon. He said the best thing that happened to the region was the Jews coming to the Middle East because they were really going to help improve the region. It goes to show you that in those days the thinking of some of these Arabs was much different from what it is today.

*Q: Let's take it up through high school. Did Israel and the State of Israel and the various wars, did that intrude on whatever you were doing?*

GABRIEL: No. It wasn't until after '72 that I became an “Arab-American.” In high school we did a spoof on the Johnny Carson show and I and another buddy of mine imitated two interviewees, an Arab and an Israeli. During Johnny's interview we got into a hilarious fight. I don't remember the context of the spoof now, but it was in regards to the Israeli/ Arab conflict.

*Q: You weren't an Arab-American then.*

GABRIEL: No. This was funny. This is true for all Lebanese, Stu. We were either Turks or Syrians in our earliest years. Remember, when our parents came at the turn of the century, Lebanon wasn't really a country. It was all Syria. My father's passport says

Syria, Region Mt. Lebanon. As you know, the mountain region of Lebanon was granted a special status in 1860 as a French protectorate to protect the Christians in the area from extremism of Turkish rule. Hence the wording on the passport, “Mt. Lebanon.” Here we are, Syrians. We even called a lot of our cooking Syrian cooking. Then came the Danny Thomas show in the mid 1950s.... Remember that show?

*Q: The famous comedian.*

GABRIEL: Yes. He was Lebanese. When he became famous, all of a sudden the trend was to be Lebanese. We never used that term until then. So about the time I was born, we were starting to identify ourselves as Lebanese. After the oil embargo of '73 and a newly felt prejudice against being of Arab ancestry, we became more politically aware of our roots, and that's when the process of politicizing our heritage started, and we became more amenable to being Arab-Americans, although some Lebanese who are Christian do not like to be called Arab-American. These people have held on to this Phoenician-Lebanese feeling.

*Q: In high school with your shoe shine and all the work, did you have much time for a social life or sports?*

GABRIEL: I did. I burnt the candle at both ends. I played freshman football, but then unfortunately I got mononucleosis in my sophomore year, which stopped my football career. At the same time, I needed money, so I stopped sports from then on. I never pursued sports in high school after that except for skiing, which is still a passion of mine. After school I worked at the shoe shine shop and after work I would go out with my friends, so my social life never suffered. Only the 3-6 P.M. time frame when I was shining shoes limited me, meaning my extra-curricular school activities. I also worked on Saturdays, but it seemed like all my friends also did, so it didn't seem to matter much.

The only thing that intruded on the 3-6pm timeframe was JUG, which was detention, which I got fairly regularly. JUG stood for Justice Under God. I let the Prefect of discipline know

when I was graduating from high school that he may not see the remaining tuition I owed since I missed so many shoe shines due to JUG.

*Q: The movies, was this the big thing?*

GABRIEL: Let's see. Our big things were the dances on Friday nights, but then, remember, we were a regional Catholic high school. In some cases our friends were 50 miles away. On the weekends, before we had cars, we would actually hop the train—sneak on the train—there was a train from New York to Chicago every night at seven o'clock going, and every night at twelve o'clock coming back, something like that. We would sneak on the train when it came through at seven, go hang out in Salamanca, New York, 18 miles away, where a whole crew of our friends were located, then jump on the midnight train back or hitchhike home if we missed the train.

*Q: You must have been giving your mother fits!*

GABRIEL: Oh yes! She probably didn't know about most of it, but there was a very safe feeling in those days. When we all started driving cars, we were always in our cars. We'd go up to Delavan, New York to visit other friends, some 40 miles away. There was essentially a 50-mile radius around Olean within which we had friends, so we took a lot of weekend day or night trips.

Regarding my mother, I remember her sitting me down after one of my late nights out. I came home early in the morning and she sat me down. I think I was a sophomore in high school. She went on to explain that she was an only parent, and a much older parent than most, actually old enough to be my grandmother. The generational differences between us were enormously hard to understand for her, I'm sure. As an only parent she worried that people would talk about me if I ever go into trouble. She said that if I got into serious trouble I may even end up at Father Baker's home, which was a home for boys taken away from their parents for behavioral problems. She said she'd make a deal with me. If I promised to never embarrass her or otherwise get in trouble she would never place any

curfew restrictions on me. From that day forward my mother never placed curfews on me and I must admit I took her words so seriously that I kept my promise to my mother for the rest of my high school and college career.

*Q: While you were in high school, did world affairs intrude much?*

GABRIEL: I would say, not much. My feelings about policy and justice started more from a domestic point of view, the issues of racism in particular, and were influenced with my being Lebanese. At the dinner table we would talk about the Middle East and hear things about the Middle East, but by and large our families were apolitical. My father was an exception. A memory of my father is him at his typewriter writing to his congressman expressing strong feelings about issues of racism and equality. He was often angry about something that was wrong in America or about something that was wrong with the downtrodden of America. But remember he died when I was seven.

My first international trip, other than to Canada, was in the summer between my junior and senior years in college. It was in the days when everyone was hitchhiking through Europit was cheap and there was even a book written, Europe on 5 dollars a day. My buddies Buck O'Connell and Mike Timme considered it, but I was making too much money on construction to abandon work early in August for the three to four week trip to Europe. But my mother told me it may be the only chance in my life that I would be able to do it, so we went in August of 1971. I quit work three weeks early. It was the first time since I was ten that I didn't work three weeks in a row.

We each took $200, in addition to spending $160 each for a round trip ticket to Luxemburg on Icelandic Airlines. We hitchhiked through Luxemburg, Belgium, Amsterdam, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France. It was an experience that would shape my thinking for the rest of my life and internationalized my thinking. As a matter of fact, the next time I would travel overseas would be with my wife in 1984 to China. We have travelled to about

50 countries now in our life and lived on three continents. The interest in going overseas and being influenced by other cultures started on this trip in 1971 with Buck and Mike.

*Q: The political overlay, was your family mainly Democratic?*

GABRIEL: My father must have been. Who knows? I was too young when he died. I would say my mother leaned Democratic and generally voted Democratic, and my sister and I are pretty rabid Democrats.

*Q: You were only ten, but the election of 1960, Kennedy. How did that hit your area?*

GABRIEL: Oh, we were excited! Any Catholic understood what was going on. In grade school we used to adopt “pagan babies.” Can you imagine? It's so sad to call it that, but we used to have a bake sale every Friday, and if we earned five dollars from the sale or others donating some money, we got to name the baby, and the money went overseas to help this so-called identified, newly named child. Classes would have contests on how many babies we could adopt in any year. We named one of the babies John F. Kennedy and sent the President a letter. When he replied we were so excited. The letter was posted in our classroom for the whole year, and probably longer. I think I was in fifth or sixth grade when he was elected, and I was in eighth grade when he died. His death affected everyone a great deal. I remember the whole school, and for that matter most Americans, were greatly affected.

*Q: Did you get any feel for his public service from that period? You were pretty young.*

GABRIEL: I think public service for me was really first inspired by my father. I think this desire to help the less fortunate was driven by his feelings. My mother was a woman who cared a great deal about other people. And we didn't have money, so all of that mixed together, I think, makes you look at the rest of the world and say, “If I had the chance, what would I do?”

I remember when I was 13 we came to Washington with my mother for my cousin Eddie Figouri's wedding. We took the train through Harrisburg. We stayed at the Commodore Hotel, now called the Phoenix hotel. It cost $8 a night. It's also the first time I remembering seeing and using an air conditionethe wedding was in August. We later met up with my mother's friend June Hall and her son Ernie, otherwise called Lee at the time, and also a friend of mine before I went into grade school. Lee later went to MIT, earned a grade of 5.0 and now has the most patents in General Electric's (GE) history. The four of us toured the city until we went back to the hotel in the summer heat and dropped in front of the air conditioner in our room. I fell so in love with Washington on this trip and told my mother, “Some day I want to move here.”

Later, in college, I remember writing to myself my thoughts on what I wanted to do professionally. I opined that the three most important professions that have the greatest affect on people were journalism, teaching and government service. I fixated on government service pretty early. When I mentioned earlier I wanted to become a lawyer, it was actually to be a poverty lawyer, somebody who would help poor people and/or to use it to go into government service. That I eventually ended up in Washington was due to these early thoughts and that trip with my mother.

*Q: In college, you were there when?*

GABRIEL: '68 to '72, which were extremely volatile times.

*Q: Talk about your college experience.*

GABRIEL: College experience, Stu, was very meaningful as well, but I came from a cocoon of a wonderful life. My family was wonderful, a really solid family, as were my friends and high school environment. Everything was great. It was hard to top that in college, although we had a good college life. Like I said, five of my buddies and I went to Gannon together.

I just gave the winter commencement speech at Gannon last weekend, and I'd be happy to share it with you. I talked about my two neighbors in my dorm when I showed up for my first week at college. My roommate was one of my lifelong buddies, Rob Ruby. One of our neighbors happened to be the priest of the dorm, Father Peterson. How I ended up next to him, I don't know. I always wondered if my mother's prayers were answered. Here I am ready to get away from my mother, and this guy, who is probably worse than my mother, is living next door to me. I ended up serving Mass every day for him. On the other side was a guy named Fred Miller, a black American who was recruited under a program Gannon initiated to recruit blacks from inner cities. As a result, the diversity at Gannon was impressive. The problem was that there was no social structure for inner city blacks in greater Erie or at the university. We had violent eruptions at college. Julian Bond, the current chairman of the NAACP, was engaged to mediate between blacks and whites. Several people were permanently injured from the riots that ensued. I was one of a group of twenty students, ten white and ten black, who were selected to go away for a two week sensitivity session and workshop for the purpose of recommending actions to the school and students to ameliorate the problems. I came back from that experience determined to bridge black and white understanding and friendship.

One of the more memorable action items from that retreat involved me becoming the campaign manager for Hazel Dowe, a black woman from the Bronx and fellow retreater, in a bid to run for Student President of the school. We knew it was a long shot, but we decided the effort itself would put black and white issues into public view for all to see and confront, and hopefully change. Hazel lost, but our friendship strengthened and I remained friends with Hazel even after we left school, although we have now lost track of one another.

Another important event in racial relations while we were at Gannon involved my friend Blair Simmons, a black friend. This occurred before the race riots. During our freshman year, about twenty of us guys, including the five from Olean, hung out together and partied

and played sports together. The fraternity, Alpha Phi Delta (APD) approached us and explained that most in their fraternity were seniors and would be leaving at the end of the following year. They wanted a big influx of freshmen as a result. We were invited, in mass, to pledge the fraternity, except that is, for Blair. We were excited to be approached like this but saddened by their obvious racism toward Blair. It was an agonizing decision for everyone as they all loved and respected Blair. But many wanted to join a fraternity, so we went our separate ways. Everyone pledged but Blair, Rob Ruby (also known as Rube) and me.

As a consequence, that separated our group somewhat in our sophomore year, with them at the frat house and the three of us in the dormitory, South Hall. But we had our fun as well that year, getting close to a great group of women from Mercyhurst and taking weekend trips together, including a number of ski trips to Peak n' Peak Ski Resort. Until this day I remember the anguish Blair went through, never feeling a part of the white culture, but preferring to be with his white friends. On the other hand, although he didn't hang out with the black community at school, he was still black and conflicts often occurred when it came to dating and other difficult social situations.

*Q: Could you talk a bit about that? I would have thought that college off in upstate New York and away, Catholic and all, wouldn't have that sort of thing.*

GABRIEL: Well, it did. In '68, that was the height of racial tension, and it wasn't hard for this problem to erupt. Remember, the school was recruiting inner-city youths from southern Philadelphia and Harlem, and from Pittsburg, Buffalo and Cleveland. These students had nothing to do socially, no outlets. They weren't ready for a little town like Erie and didn't especially like it. I think the dormitory life was tough for them. There was a lot of voluntary racial separation among students in those days, and although I tried to cross that bridge because I had grown up in a Lebanese and black neighborhood and had black friends in Olean, it wasn't to be.

The Lebanese community was mixed with the black community in Olean, so there was a lot of intermingling and playing together, although none of them were Catholic, to my knowledge. So although we didn't go to school together, we played at the playground, Cedar Park, together. By way of background, one of my good buddies and my shoe shining partner, Reggie Spiller, was black. We had a lot of interaction with our black friends until high school. But when we went to high school, we lost touch with each other, except for Reggie.

Now back to college, I quickly learned that the blacks in our dormitory had no interest in socializing with me. As a matter of fact, I found it quite natural to try to develop relationships, but very few others did. Blacks were not interested in crossing the bridge and whites fueled the fire with racism in the fraternities and in the college.

*Q: What did they do when they took the two groups to the retreat?*

GABRIEL: The group was forced to live together for three weeks and face off on their feelings at first. The question was, how are we going to create a future for ourselves and our country if we can't get along? The group was made up of some of us who were “bridgers,” people looking to bring each other's differences together. My black partner in the bridging exercise, Hazel Dowe, quickly became my new friend. There were a couple of us who were bridgers, but for the most part there was a lot of racism in that retreat house. By the end of that retreat though, we were developing friendships and better understandings. I remember this one kid from a small town in Pennsylvania stood up and said, “You know, I've never seen a black person in my life until I came here.” Can you imagine that? This statement represented a turning point at the retreat, as someone finally put their finger on the problem: we just didn't know and understand one another. Then some of our black colleagues expressed similar realizations. It turned out to be a wonderful exercise, and actually helped a number of us, six or eight of us interracially, to begin a process of having social events together and gradually bringing more blacks and whites into our circle. This expanded group then demanded a black student union, started

supporting blacks for the Student Senate and demanding more concerts that appealed to both races, such as Sly and the Family Stone.

*Q: Looking back, part of the problem was that the college went out and did this recruiting without real thought of what to do afterward.*

GABRIEL: That's my assessment.

*Q: Actually, the State Department did this, too. Lots of institutions did this. We'll just hire people of color and then it will all be fine.*

GABRIEL: It was a disaster. I don't think those guys had a great experience overall in college. And by the way, I never did get to know Fred Miller very well, my other neighbor in the freshman dormitory.

*Q: How about the Vietnam War?*

GABRIEL: During those turbulent times it felt like we spent more time in Washington than in Erie. Once a week there was a demonstration. We'd all get on buses or in our cars and drive to Washington to demonstrate. One of the issues of the day was the war in Vietnam, along with race relations, the environment and the war on poverty.

They talked about it at the commencement exercises I attended last week. One of the professors said he remembered that we took over the President's office. He said, “I was in my office at the time. I locked the door, and I was nervous because I heard the kids rampaging down the hall. I looked out, and there was Ed Gabriel in the front row and I said, 'Oh, I'm OK now,' so I opened the door. I knew they weren't going to hurt me.” I had to laugh. In my speech last week I said, “This week wasn't the first time I was in the President's office. But it was the first time I was invited into the President's office.” The day we took over the President's office is talked about until this day. The Vietnam War affected us a great deal and we were going to make the school know how it affected us.

It was also a time of women's rights and the sexual revolution. Women were coming into their own and speaking out. Also, you had the racial riots, and by 1970 the environmental revolution, Earth Day. It was quite a crazy time for those of us in universities. I'm sure that all affected me, but I think when I came to Gannon I already had strong views on racial issues.

*Q: Did you get a feeling that the Catholic Church—I'm talking about the hierarchy—was really out of its depth in trying to deal with these various things: racism, the war, and all of that?*

GABRIEL: I didn't distinguish what was happening from the Catholic Church's stand point from the general trends outside the church. I saw it as a lack of leadership overall. I thought leadership, no matter where, whether in college, in city, state or federal government, the Church or in corporate America, just didn't get it in terms of racial diversity and the other issues of our day. Although I was against the war and I wasn't about to go and fight in Vietnam, racial inequality dominated most of my social policy interests.

In my sophomore year the United States started the military draft lottery. My senior year was the last year of the lottery. There were three years of the lottery. In the last year, the year I became eligible, the lottery number went up to 95. I was 103 I think, so I didn't have to go. I wouldn't have gone anyway. I kept telling my mother that I wasn't going to serve in a useless, stupid war.

*Q: Did you get the chance to go anywhere, to go down south or anything?*

GABRIEL: Washington was the only place I went to concerning issues of equality, race, the environment, the Vietnam War and poverty. When I was a junior in college, I created a work-study program in Washington, which 11 students participated in. I worked with our political science department and set up a three-credit political science course during three intensive weeks in January 1971. Dr. Kim was our professor on that memorable

trip. During our work-study program, we had meetings with TV anchor Roger Mudd, Supreme Court Justice Black and Senators Fulbright and Humphrey, among other notable celebrities.

*Q: What courses did you end up taking?*

GABRIEL: I made my official... [end of tape]

*Q: You were saying your major was a double one essentially, accounting...*

GABRIEL: Accounting, with 30 credits in economics. I took enough credits in economics for a major but Gannon did not award double majors or minors. I also took enough courses in philosophy to have minored in that subject.

I should also mention that throughout college I held several part-time jobs. Because of my family's income level I was eligible for the federal work-study program, which provided me with jobs around the campus. During my freshman year, I was a janitor in our dormitory, Wehrle Hall. It was a very embarrassing time for me, being a janitor, cleaning up after my classmates, but I survived, working for the head janitor and an Italian immigrant, Reno.

My sophomore year I got jobs outside the college that paid more than the work-study program. During one semester, my buddy Rube and I split the night shift in the men's department of Miller's department store. I now forget what I did the other semester.

During my first semester of my junior year I worked for a florist, Flowers by Marion, as a delivery truck driver. Also, during my junior and senior years I worked for an economics professor, Charles Bennett, as his research assistant, where I learned a great deal about the federal socio-economic policies concerning the new war on poverty in the United States started by President Johnson. This greatly enhanced my understanding of macro and micro economic policy, but more importantly it gave me an insight into government

programs to fight poverty in America. This would prove key in getting my first job out of college.

*Q: By the time you graduated in '72, in your thinking what was on the horizon for you?*

GABRIEL: I wanted to be a poverty lawyer and help poor people, either with a non-profit organization or in government. I pretty much thought that racial equality and anti-poverty development issues were the passions I wanted to pursue professionally.

*Q: So what happened?*

GABRIEL: I took the LSAT's and didn't do so well on them.

*Q: That's the exam to get into law school.*

GABRIEL: Exactly. I didn't get into any accredited school. I decided to wait a year and take the test over in the hope that I would improve my scores. In the meantime, I started applying for jobs and within a couple of weeks after graduation, in June of 1972, I was offered a job as a rural planner with the Greater Erie Community Action Committee (GECAC). It was part of the Community Action Program under the Office of Economic Opportunity, better known as part of President Johnson's war on poverty. When I took the interview, I knew the mandates and programs, as well as the acronyms of government programs and agencies, and was able to converse in the interviewer's language, which was purposely laced with acronyms, and this impressed him. This was due to the work-study program I did with Charlie Bennett, as I previously discussed. As a consequence, they hired me over several hundred other applicants.

At GECAC, I went to work for Ben Wiley, a well known black leader in the community and Executive Director of GECAC. He just died a couple of years ago. Tom Ridge gave the eulogy at his funeral; I was one of the honorary pall bearers. Ben was a remarkable man. He was not only my first boss out of college but a lifelong mentor. As a rural planner,

my job consisted primarily of writing federal grant proposals, seeking federal funding and assisting in the initial implementation of the programs. I focused principally on the areas of aging, education and manpower. I really loved the job and thought it was a dream come true. I never applied to law school again, and decided that I had found a home working to develop anti-poverty programs and in community planning in general. Further, it was an endearing experience working within the black community.

*Q: Tell me a bit about Erie at that time. I went through Erie in the'80s, and I've never been through such a discouraging place. It was just row after row of empty factories and warehouses.*

GABRIEL: Yes. It's a very depressing place. It's gone down, I think, although Gannon has started to consume the downtown to the point where it's helped to revive the inner city.

*Q: What was your experience in Erie, ability to do anything and how the community was endearing?*

GABRIEL: It was an endearing time. I worked with my fellow black colleagues on poverty problems that mostly involved the black community or the issues of the aged. The experience was invigorating and I found the black community warm and appreciative of the work we did, regardless of whether we were black or white. GECAC had developed individual neighborhood associations and spun them off as implementers of the programs we were developing, which put the programs much closer to the neighborhood. GECAC grew into a $13 million operation, including its umbrella functions over the neighborhood organizations as well as the programs it ran directly. This gave me direct access to the local neighborhoods and their problems, where one could see the benefits of how our programs were helping the poor and the struggling in our community. On the aging programs I worked with an extremely talented man, Dick Kennedy, who was in charge of all aging programs under GECAC. Dick was an inspiration and became a dear friend to me for the rest of his life. I wrote proposals for Dick, who in turn represented them to federal

agencies for funding. Our programs for the aging were known to be among the best in the country and this is due to Dick Kennedy's wit and capabilities. During this time I also volunteered as a Big Brother to an inner city youth.

*Q: What were you doing for them?*

GABRIEL: I analyzed federal program grant opportunities that addressed anti-poverty issues for Erie city and Erie County. I then wrote proposals for federal funding, and in some cases went to Washington to present and help defend our proposals to the federal government.

*Q: What was the result of these proposals?*

GABRIEL: Proposals I wrote that received federal and state funding included aging programs such as Meals on Wheels, and ACE and SCORE programs, which utilized retired executives in education and training programs. Other aging programs involved health care, meals and transportation for the elderly.

In the field of education, I developed a three-university program involving Allegheny, Mercyhurst and Gannon Universities for Upward Bound, a program for disadvantaged children to take remedial courses in the summer and enhance their college careers.

We also started a training program at various manufacturing facilities in Erie that combined retired workers with disadvantaged youth, the Erie Guild Program. The retired workers of the plant came back to train disadvantaged youth who then had the opportunity of working at the plant where they were trained or at another plant in Erie.

In the field of education I also started a summer work-study program for disadvantaged college students, with the purpose of giving them a leg up on jobs when they graduated, similar to what happened to me when I worked for the economics professor.

*Q: I would think it would be very difficult...*

GABRIEL: I was only 22 at the time, maybe 23.

*Q: ..doing this in a city that was essentially dying.*

GABRIEL: Right, but the war on poverty was really gearing up. It was great, an interesting time, and the funding continued under President Nixon.

*Q: As a matter of fact, Nixon was very progressive.*

[Crosstalk. Only snippets could be deciphered.]

GABRIEL: Very progressive, in spite of his obvious failings.

*Q: People forget this.*

GABRIEL: He was not only progressive on foreign policy but on environmental policy and even regarding the status of American Indians.

*Q: Oh, yes...*

GABRIEL: The list of accomplishments is extensive.

*Q: It's an interesting thing when you look back on this. Nixon was described as the villain by the liberal side yet probably was as liberal as they were in many of his domestic programs.*

GABRIEL: Yes, Stu. That was a very exciting time, both good and bad. During the Nixon years, while I was there, GECAC's revenue doubled.

*Q: You went to Washington when?*

GABRIEL: February 24, 1974. I went to work for Judd Breslin, Deputy Assistant Administrator at the Federal Energy Office (FEO). Two weeks after I arrived, the FEO became the Federal Energy Administration (FEA). Bill Simon was the administrator. I worked directly for Judd.

I met and became a good friend of Judd's at GECAC, where he was on a management assignment from Cressep, McCormick and Paget, a Washington-based consulting firm advising GECAC. During my time at GECAC, Judd was appointed by President Nixon to help start the Federal Energy Office. You will recall that following the Arab oil embargo, President Nixon formed the FEO by combining a number of lesser agencies with jurisdiction on energy issues, including the energy price division of the Cost of Living Council. Governor Love was its first and short-lived administrator, followed by the infamous Bill Simon.

Judd had known of my dream to one day work in Washington and serve my country. Following his appointment, I called to remind him of my interest. The timing was impeccable. He had just testified before George McGovern's Senate committee. The purpose of the hearing was to understand how the FEO was dealing with energy price spikes on the poor and other special sub-groups of the population. When asked by McGovern what the FEO was doing for poor people, Judd, winging an answer, replied that he was establishing an office to deal especially with the impact of prices on certain disadvantaged groups. Judd asked me to come to Washington to establish that office. I left Ben Wiley and GECAC just short of two years after starting and joined the FEO on February 24, 1974.

*Q: You did this working with him for how long?*

GABRIEL: I worked for FEA and its successor agencies for about four years. You will recall that Nixon resigned from office in August 1974. I was given an “emergency indefinite” appointment at the FEO, which was then converted into a civil service, GS09

appointment. In April 1974, Bill Simon became Treasury secretary, but that did not affect my position. John Sawhill took over as administrator. In July, Judd and most of the high ranking FEA officials were let go, which worried me, since my position was still an “emergency indefinite” one. My little Office of Special Impact merged with Consumer Affairs and I went to work for the Director of that office, Hazel Rollins, later to become Hazel R. O'Leary, the Secretary of Energy under President Clinton.

After Gerald Ford became President, he appointed Frank Zarb as administrator. He respected Hazel very much, and by then she and I were very close colleagues, so my position became stable. When President Carter won the presidency, Jack O'Leary took over as administrator. He met Hazel and they later married. During the first year of the Carter administration, the FEA was combined with other agencies into the newly created Department of Energy (DOE). Hazel was promoted to an administrator position. By then I had other opportunities and after nearly four years at FEA/DOE I decided to leave the DOE.

*Q: By the way, maybe a thought we haven't come to, but is there a significant other who appears on the scene?*

GABRIEL: Funny you should ask, Stu. It was in my first year at the FEA that I met my future wife, Kathleen Linehan. Although we became good friends, she wouldn't date me for another eight years. I met her in the spring of '74 at FEA. Our first date, other than a lunch, was March 4, 1982.

*Q: It takes a while to mature.*

[Laughter].

GABRIEL: Good things are worth waiting for.

*Q: Let's talk about what you were doing at FEA.*

GABRIEL: My first reaction was that I was living my dream. I not only got a job in Washington to serve my country, but at a young age I had the opportunity to interact with high-ranking officials and actually be involved in establishing an office to help develop energy policy for disadvantaged groups. I arrived in DC in my '72 Volkswagen bug, which had an “Impeach Nixon” sticker on it. Once or twice I was allowed to park in the parking lot at FEA, which was located at the post office building at 12th and Pennsylvania Avenue, next to the new Ronald Reagan building. After parking there a couple of times I was called to Judd's office, and he said, “Take that damn sticker off your car. You shouldn't have an 'Impeach Nixon' sticker on your car. You work for him.” By the way, I've come to respect Richard Nixon and have since read a number of his books. He had good and bad points but we seem to forget some of the good points and only remember the bad points.

*Q: There's a lot of baggage there.*

GABRIEL: As a senior economics analyst, the office I was asked to establish was called the Office of Special Impact. Its purpose was to measure price impacts—economic impacts—on sub-groups of the American population: the poor, the aged, migrant farm workers, American Indians, Eskimos, Black Americans and Hispanics, among other groups. In general, we were concerned about the impact of price increases on each sub-group and how they were each affected differently, depending on their socio-economic status. I was even directed to hire a few people for the office. I was young, 24 years old. I felt lucky and honored to have such responsibility at such a young age. After a few months, a director for the office was hired but he only lasted a few months. When we merged with Hazel, under John Sawhill, she dismissed the Director and had me report directly to her on this mandate.

*Q: This was the Watergate business.*

GABRIEL: Yes. Nixon was about to fall when I came to government. John Sawhill was appointed to replace Bill Simon, in about April of 1974. He changed his senior team at

that point, which meant that my friend Judd was let go. As I mentioned, Hazel O'Leary was then brought in to head the new, combined office of Consumer Affairs and Special Impact. She had my immediate boss removed and luckily brought me up under her wing. Hazel later married Jack O'Leary who was to become the first deputy secretary of Energy under President Carter. And under President Clinton she was to become secretary of Energy. I actually was the person to recommend her to the presidential transition team in 1992. It took more influential people than myself, however, to move the nomination forward. Vernon Jordan, Dennis Bakke and Ron Brown were among those who helped Hazel during this time.

*Q: You're saying Clinton?*

GABRIEL: Yes, Clinton. Hazel Rollins and I go back to that summer of 1974. Now, going back to my position under Hazel, I was given the freedom to delve further into the issue of American Indians. During our economic analyses of various subgroups of the American population and how the impact of energy price spikes affected them, I discovered that Indians were not only a disenfranchised group of Americans confronting the impact of price increases on their way of life, but that they owned substantial amounts of coal, oil, gas and uranium. This work tilted me away from other work I was doing at the time and towards a concentration on Indian energy development.

This is when I established long time friendships with LaDonna Harris, famous Indian advocate, wife of former Senator Fred Harris and head of the Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO). I also became good friends with Charles H. Lohah, famous Indian advocate, professor and well known Indian jurist and judge, as well as George Crossland, who was also a well known lawyer on the issue of Indian water rights. The first issue they brought to my attention was their concern for Indian water rights, particularly in the western U.S. We were able to recognize their rights to water in the Energy Project Independence Report submitted to President Ford.

I should mention that prior to this I had worked on other issues, including the effects of price increases on the poor. I was instrumental in the development of the Low-Income Energy Act, which was the first attempt by the federal government to provide grants and low-income loans to the poor to winterize their homes. I also developed a plan to provide migrant farm workers with a priority status to get gas at our nation's truck stops, in order to reach their destinations and not be stranded in between.

Another interesting project involved the change in the way we rated octane at the pump. You will recall a change in the mid '70s in octane ratings. The ratings actually went down, which confused the customer into believing they were now buying lower octane at the same higher octane price. Actually it was a formula change. There were two ways of rating octane, motor (actual driving) and research (in the laboratory). Whichever rating is higher was the one we had been using up to this time. We proposed to change it. Some comments came in that suggested the motor method or research method alone, giving different arguments. One (the current formula at that time) was familiar to the consumer. The other was more accurate. Others recommended a blending of the two and then adding four points to it, thus bringing the number back to the old numbers. This, some argued, would not confuse the consumer. Sunoco recommended a color code, as this is what they were using all along. We finally published a formula: R+M/2, which was a simple blending of the two, without adding the extra four points, which some had advocated. The consumer would eventually get used to it, we reasoned. So next time you go to the pump look below the octane number and you will see my good work in the formula labeling.

One other issue I worked on involved the famous coal strike of 1974. I went to Hazard County, Kentucky to meet with community organizers and local union officials to discuss the importance of mining enough coal to provide fuel for poor people who had no other means of heating their homes. When I came back from that trip I wrote a memo on what I had found and recommended a jaw boning effort by the FEA to convince the unions

and companies to devise a means to get small amounts of coal to poor people, which did occur.

But as I said, as time went on I was increasingly interested in and assigned to the resource development interests of the American Indian. In the process of this research and work, I deepened my understanding of American Indians. Eventually, I was sent to represent the FEA Administrator at a meeting of resource tribes in Polson, Montana. The meeting actually focused on Indian water rights, but in the process, several presentations were made concerning the development of Indian energy resources. It was the first time I was west of Chicago. I was still 24 years old at the time. This would be the first time I would put my research on Indian energy development before a group publicly and ask questions about the theories I was developing in this regard.

On a personal note, I must admit I felt that I was surpassing my wildest dreams in this job. I must also admit that I was pretty insecure at the time, Stu. I had realized a childhood goal to come to Washington to serve my country, but I sometimes wondered if I was really equipped for the job. I believed I was doing a good job, and believed that if I stayed longer at work than everyone else and worked harder, I could overcome any handicap. But I also knew I got the job because of the kindheartedness of Judd Breslin. I remember working long hours and working hard to prove myself and being worried that there were so many people smarter than me. Over time, I came to realize that I was holding my own. There was many a night, I go up Pennsylvania Avenue to Basin's or Old Ebbitt's for a burger on my way home at 10pm.

*Q: Just to get a feel for working for the Government: You're new to this, you've got people who've been around for a while, but it's a fairly new department so things are always a little bit fluid then.*

GABRIEL: Exactly, and the agency was quite entrepreneurial at the time, which I think helped me. When I arrived, there were 60 employees. There were 20,000 when I left the DOE.

*Q: Did you feel the hot breath of, you might say, the Civil Service pros on your back? Because of the newness...*

GABRIEL: I came to realize that there were some unbelievably talented colleagues who were among the best and brightest attracted to this new emerging issue. Most were young. I also worked with some people who had been in the system a while and were not exactly efficient or overly talented, I guess you would say.

FEO was in the office of the president until it became the Federal Energy Administration around April of 1974. I was surprised to be meeting such young, talented people as well as older, well known personalities like Bill Simon. I didn't feel the bureaucracy at the FEO or FEA. I started to when the agency grew into the Department of Energy, and I was reassigned to the Electric Utility Office, which was a division under the administration, headed by Hazel, of the Department of Energy. I was now several layers down from Hazel, assigned to do mundane economic analysis concerning electric utility rate structures. I remember working on the costs and benefits of lifeline rates versus fixed versus bulk rates. In any case, I knew immediately that I had to get out of there.

*Q: That was in seventy...*

GABRIEL: Seventy-seven. The end of '77, so for four years I was with the FEO/FEA/DOE.

*Q: How did you find from your perspective the change from... Were you there when Carter came in?*

GABRIEL: Yes.

*Q: Did you see any particular difference at that point?*

GABRIEL: Yes. I can't say it was Carter, and I can't say it was Ford or Nixon, but there were big differences between Bill Simon, who just absolutely knew what he wanted and could do as he pleased within a new small agency that was essentially his fiefdom, and the huge Department of Energy that was now becoming a sizable bureaucracy.

*Q: He (Bill Simon) was later, Secretary... He made his name as Secretary of Treasury.*

GABRIEL: Right after this job he went to the Treasury. John Sawhill followed him under Nixon, then Frank Zarb under Gerald Ford. Jack O'Leary came in under Carter as the head of FEA and then as deputy secretary under DOE. Jim Schlesinger was the first DOE secretary. The competence under Ford was remarkable. In all the agencies up and down the line, he picked qualified people. It didn't matter whether they were Democratic or Republican. Frank Zarb was a great example of this. I don't think the same can be said of the Carter administration, but an exception was Jack O'Leary, who in my opinion was the most qualified person to be the head of energy policy in our country. Unfortunately, he wasn't. He was deputy. He and Zarb were truly remarkable administrators. Bill Simon was a different breed of person altogether and a bigger personality than the others.

Q; Where was Simon from, and where were the other two coming from?

GABRIEL: I forget what company, but he came from Wall Street. .Simon's attitude was one of, “It's my way or the highway.” He was a tough taskmaster and knew what he wanted and where he was going. He had no tolerance for anything but the macro issues. One funny memory I have was from when I was in one of the very few senior staff meetings with Simon and his deputies. One of his deputies was Cha Che Owens, a bright young graduate from the University of Texas. Cha Che had devised the very controversial and complicated two-tier energy pricing system, delineating the differences between controlling the price of oil before and after certain time frames. I was in the meeting when Simon was

reviewing his decision on this. I remember the conversation between Cha Che and Simon went something like this: “Cha Che, have I ever disagreed with you on anything you've proposed? Have I even substantially questioned your proposals?” “No, I can't say you have,” Cha Che said. “You know why, Cha Che? Because I don't understand a damn thing you're saying.” I don't remember if anyone laughed.

[Crosstalk]

GABRIEL: The Nixon and Ford administrations didn't want to interfere in the market and manipulate pricing. That left me working on issues of demand constraint solutions and how we could propose policies to help the poor without interfering with the pricing mechanisms. Most of the work I did therefore revolved around developing grant programs or tax benefits to the poor and working poor, such as incentives to weatherize their houses. These were the limits under Simon. The Ford administration was short term. By the time Ford came into office and Zarb was appointed, I was almost entirely focused on Indians. Zarb really cared about the plight of American Indians.

*Q: Do you want to talk about the Indians now? We are talking about a period before at least some of the... At least talking 2005, you've got casinos and Indians involved in that. There was none of that, so the Indians...*

GABRIEL: But the work I was involved in was a precursor for tribes going into bingo and other business issues related to the exercise of their sovereign rights.

*Q: Do you want to talk about what you were up to?*

GABRIEL: Yes. As I said earlier, my first public meeting with American Indians was in Polson, Montana in October 1974, on a trip to represent the federal government, and to discuss the purpose of the FEA and how it could relate to American Indian issues. It was during the time of the development of the Project Energy Independence, which was the definitive long-term plan under the Ford administration to reach energy independence by

1985, I think. I was in Polson to discuss the plan and seek the tribes' input on water rights issues, and to inform them of our thinking on consumer and energy development issues.

By the time I returned to Washington, researched the issue more and wrote my findings, Zarb was administrator. Hazel sent my memo to him. My main finding concluded that Indians may own as much as 10 % of the oil and natural gas reserves in the country, 50% of the privately held uranium and one third of the coal in the U.S. As a consequence, I recommended we look at Indians not just as consumers, but as developers that could help us with our energy independence plan. Zarb's response was quick and affirmative. He told Hazel to undertake a task force effort to recommend how the federal government could assist American Indians to exploit their resources. I was put in charge of the task force. The chairpersons of 22 tribes were invited to participate in the task force, which took two years to develop its recommendations. Other agencies such as Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) of the Department of Interior (DOI) were invited as observers.

*Q: That was from when to when?*

GABRIEL: This was a two year process.

*Q: This was from when to when?*

GABRIEL: This started.... The memo went to Frank in the fall of '74. The first meeting of the task force was April '75, and the initial findings were presented by Administrator Zarb in a meeting in September '76. We then got caught up in the '76 elections and by the end of 1976 Jack O'Leary had taken over from Zarb. Jack had most recently been the Secretary of Energy for the State of New Mexico and as such was extremely familiar with American Indian resource issues, even more so than Zarb. He easily picked up where Zarb left off and was as progressive as Zarb in promoting our recommendations.

*Q: When you talk about 22 tribes, we're really talking about tribes...*

GABRIEL: Yes, they were the heads of tribes, mainly from the Rocky Mountain West.

*Q: ...and what we call the Mountain...*

GABRIEL: Rocky Mountain West.

*Q: Rocky Mountain West.*

GABRIEL: From the Dakotas to Washington and Oregon, from Montana down through the Rockies—Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona. Oklahoma tribes were also represented.

*Q: Because so much of the emphasis today on Indians is through gambling, and a lot of that's along the East Coast and the Gulf Coast...*

GABRIEL: Right. Well, there is gaming in the west as well.

*Q: ..which are completely different. What was the Indian response? How did you find...*

GABRIEL: At first they were a little suspicious. I was affectionately referred to as Ed the Fed by the tribal representatives. Historically, their resources had not been exploited to their benefit and they wanted help to change that. The federal government through the BIA had historically been on the side of the oil companies and leased these valuable resources with little or no benefit to the tribes. But over time we built trust and confidence and our purposes became one and the same: to develop their energy resources to their own benefit and to the benefit of the American people. This is a lesson I carried to my diplomatic work in later years. Without developing trust and confidence with your interlocutors, it is highly unlikely that you can attain your objectives. Once we developed trust and confidence with the American Indians, it was very easy to work with them because they saw an opportunity here to really do something big for their communities.

They saw collaboration between two parties wanting to protect their rights but also to develop U.S. reserves to the benefit of the American people.

*Q: My understanding is the Indian Bureau as part of the Department of Interior, and the whole thing... There are trust funds that have been...*

[Crosstalk; deciphered to best of ability.]

GABRIEL: The management of these oil trust funds by the BIA and DOI has been a disaster. You have now seen press on how bad it had become. This mess was highlighted by the follow-on organization, of which I became the founding Executive Director, resulting from the FEA Indian Energy Task Force.

*Q: This is going back to the Grant administration...*

GABRIEL: In the successor non-profit organization formed after the task force, we filed the first charge against the Indian trust funds. I haven't discussed my next career and probably should here. When I quit DOE, after I decided that electric utility pricing at the DOE was not for me, I interviewed to be the first executive director of the Council of Energy Resource Tribes (CERT), which was created as one of the recommendations of the Indian Energy Task Force. At first, I declined their offer to interview. I had made up my mind to go to work for Hazel. I had done my job for the Indians and now wanted to move into a new career, at the age of 27. A few weeks on the job with the Electric Utility Office made me realize I missed the Indian energy work. So I reconsidered and applied. Although the tribal leaders doing the interviewing had hoped to get a more experienced person, they decided to go with the devil they knew, rather than the one they didn't and picked me.

*Q: During the time you were working for the Feds as Ed, had there been much done for the Indians in this area?*

GABRIEL: Yes, but as time passed Indians began to assert their legal rights, and with it, their sovereign rights. The task force was the impetus to concretize the Indian Self Determination Act, enacted under President Nixon. This act provided Indians with more rights to operate and act like a state. That's an oversimplification but it's essentially the shorthand description. Many Indian advocacy groups before and after the Indian Energy Task Force were pressing for legal rights to oil and gas development, water rights and eventually, tax and gaming rights. Principal among those groups were AIO, headed by LaDonna Harris, and the Native American Rights Fund (NARF), headed by John Echohawk. They saw the BIA as obsolete. Why have the BIA sign a lease for 12% royalty when you can establish a joint venture or a tax-free tribal company and retain more of the profits for your own people? LaDonna was the visionary to help Indian tribes understand how important their sovereign rights were and how to begin asserting them. John was the lawyer that sued for those rights and won them.

*Q: Let's confine it to the time you were with the government that you by doing this thing had to breaking some pretty big rice bowls, weren't you?*

GABRIEL: Yes. The BIA despised our efforts at FEO. Very good point, Stu.

*Q: We're talking about commercial. Not just bureaucratic...*

GABRIEL: You're right, Stu.

*Q: ...but commercial which had been taking... Going back to Indian agents of the 1870's and all this. There has been a cozy relationship with very little dealing with the Indians but also...*

GABRIEL: Boy are you correct. As this task force started to go public, the first article about it appeared in U. S. News and World Report: “OPEC in America's Back Yard.” Indians were quoted as calling the Interior Department a wholly-owned subsidiary of Exxon. The

whole thing started to erupt. You're right. The BIA was totally incompetent and they were not happy...

*Q: BIA is Bureau of...*

GABRIEL: Indian Affairs, which is part of the DOI. Supposedly, they are the trustee of American Indians.

*Q: That's not a very good term, but anyway...*

GABRIEL: As I mentioned, the BIA, and for that matter other agencies such the Department of Commerce (DOC), felt their mandates were being infringed upon by our work at the FEA. The BIA demanded an interagency process to review and comment on our work and to participate in the recommendations we were proposing. The interagency process proved somewhat helpful. As we showed success in moving a new policy agenda forward, the other agencies wanted to be a part of the process. And although they tried to undermine us behind our backs, they proved helpful in dedicating existing resources towards a new policy agenda.

*Q: I'm interested because you're not just dealing with the bureaucracy but the politics. The Department of Interior and the BIA had some very powerful supporters in Congress I would think.*

GABRIEL: Yes, but on the other hand, the BIA was really looked at with much disdain in most policy circles and congressional members. Quite frankly, the BIA had few friends outside of the DOI community. To make your point, however, we did have a major run in with Jim Joseph, DOI under secretary and more recently our ambassador to South Africa, who did not like the fact that DOE was meddling in the DOI mandate. In those early days, however, DOE carried a lot of weight and we were able to carry on, and in the end we succeeded. The lead grant for the newly formed CERT was by the DOE, $2 million per year. BIA contributed, but they were certainly ancillary to the lead department, DOE.

*Q: I think this is probably a good place to stop, and I'll put at the end here where we'll pick this up. We'll pick this up when you left the Department of Energy the first time. That was in...*

GABRIEL: November '77.

*Q: Where did you go then?*

GABRIEL: I became the first executive director of the Council of Energy Resource Tribes.

*Q: OK, and we'll pick it up then.*

*Q: Today is the 10th of May 2006. Could you explain, in 1977 was this or '79?*

GABRIEL: This would have been the end of 1977.

*Q: What was your organization, what did it play, and what were you doing with it, with this energy organization?*

GABRIEL: As I mentioned, the Council of Energy Resource Tribes (CERT) was a result of the work at the FEA Indian Energy Task Force. One of the main recommendations of the task force was to fund a non-profit organization to technically assist Indians with energy resource development and management, and to act as a liaison with federal agencies on matters of energy development. Essentially, the task force evolved into a non-profit 501(c)3, called the Council of Energy Resource Tribes. As I mentioned, at the time CERT was established, but not yet funded, I was at the Department of Energy. I took the job at the end of 1977. As you can imagine, the mandate of CERT flew right into the face of the BIA's mandate. The 22 tribes constituted the first board of directors. They in turn elected a seven member executive committee. There was tension with the BIA even before CERT got started.

The chairman of CERT was Peter MacDonald, the chairman of the Navajo Nation. He has been described as the most influential American Indian of the 20th Century. I have never worked with or met a tribal leader as competent and visionary as Pete. He was a great inspiration to me, and affected my growth as much as anyone who touched my life professionally. If it were not for Pete, the original FEA task force would not have gotten off the ground, nor would have CERT. He was a perfectionist, a tough task master and a man who could see years ahead for his people. He was also a Marine in WWII, and the youngest of the famous Navajo code talkers. Pete would become the guiding light for all tribes in their quest to assert their legal and sovereign rights as tribes.

*Q: I can think of two, I'm not sure they're conflicting, but two forces going. One would be, do the various tribes talk to each other? Some have done it, and some don't, and how easy it is to share. Then there is also the power people. This is an extremely powerful one. I would think they would be huddling around trying to figure out how to work this to their advantage.*

GABRIEL: The power gap meaning their power versus the interest against them?

*Q: Within the tribes. The inter-play of the tribes. But also outside. Big Oil or Big Power, whatever it is.*

GABRIEL: In the first case, they shared quite equal power in the new non-governmental organization (NGO) or better put, trade association, but individually they maintained their own sovereignty over the development of their own individual resources. Navajo was responsible for Navajo, Blackfeet for Blackfeet, etc. There was really no conflict there. As a matter of fact, they saw that by joining CERT they could tap technical expertise which they couldn't afford alone, so there was a reason to come together. On the other hand, there was a dynamic on the board. The 22 tribes that came together ranged in size from maybe a thousand or two thousand people to the Navajo Indian Nation of several hundred thousand. Navajo has a land base the size of West Virginia. Each person on

the board had one vote. The executive committee, which was made up of the biggest energy developerNavajo, Northern Cheyenne, Jicarilla Apaches, Blackfeet, Crow, Osage, and Laguna Puebldid have more say in the affairs of CERT as executive committee members. They had a good way of working together, but you're right, there were some differences between the smaller tribes and larger ones, and between those that were more environmentally sensitive and those who were not, but all matters between them eventually got solved through the consensus-building culture of the board. There was also bilateral region disputes between tribes, such as Hopi and Navajo and Crow and Northern Cheyenne.

*Q: To put this into perspective, somebody looking at this today and into the future, and we're talking about a period of time when the Indians did not have all these gaming casinos and all that, has become quite both a great source of income but a bone of contention. That wasn't in the cards.*

GABRIEL: We actually set precedence for the gaming future when we started testing cases regarding tribal sovereignty. One of the first cases tested the rights of tribes to impose taxes on the reservation and to reject state taxes. Once this was defined in the tribes' favor, they were able to use tax holidays as an incentive to develop. This led to the next tribal business wave, tax-free gasoline and cigarettes on Indian lands.

Indian gaming was the next logical issue, the question being, “Do tribes have to adhere to state law on the issue of gaming?” The court decisions in favor of the tribes were so strong that the Congress finally stepped in to set a national standard that gave tribes the right to gamble but provide State governments with some ability to shape the type of gaming within their own States. So, there was some legal and historical connection between energy development of the '70s and gaming today.

One of the questions you asked earlier was about Big Oil. That's another key issue in the early development of CERT. Big Oil and CERT also started in an adversarial relationship.

With the consent of the BIA, energy companies were giving a paltry 8-12% royalty for taking their reserves. And remember, the BIA, the federal government as trustee for the tribes, was approving these unconscionable deals.

*Q: The Department of Interior which ran this has never been the... Particularly in Indian Affairs, it's been a screw up almost from the beginning, hasn't it?*

GABRIEL: The Bureau of Indian Affairs was started in the War Department, in the 1800s, as the bureau to kill Indians. It obviously did not transition well into being the tribal trustee. The incompetence of the BIA is legend, and until this day you can read news reports about lawsuits that are going on because the mis-management of energy royalties.

As a matter of fact, as Executive Director of CERT in the 1980s, I testified on the problem of BIA and the Minerals Management Service's (MMS) incompetence and participated in a panel to make recommendations on the need for necessary changes.

Going back to the issue of Big Oil, CERT tribes now had the technical capability to question existing deals and negotiate more favorable ones. We recruited some of the brightest technical staff, literally from around the world. Our chief economist was Ahmed Kooros, a former deputy minister of oil in Iran who fled the Shah in '79. Our negotiator was Chuck Lipton, a well known lawyer from the United Nations (UN), who was renowned for the deals he put together for many third world countries. The head of our technical operation was Ted Smith, an economist from the Harvard School for International Development. Our work with American Indian development was very similar to the challenges facing many third world countries in their efforts to bring equitable energy deals to their people. We employed geologists, hydro-geologists, engineers, economic analysts. In all, our technical staff numbered more than 50. We ended the days of simple leasing and were then putting together joint ventures, service contracts and wholly-owned tribal companies. Some tribes even began to vertically integrate into refining and retail.

Tribes substantially increased their benefits from their exploitation, not only from oil, gas, coal and uranium, but also from pipelines. Many pipelines ran through Indian country, and I remember one case with the Navajo. The first lease by the Arco Company years prior had been for $99,000. The renegotiation netted the tribe more than tens of millions of dollars over the life of the pipeline. In this deal, we employed what we call “opportunity cost” analysis, which simply meant assessing the cost of forcing the company to remove the line and the cost of rerouting it around the entire reservation. These are examples of the kind of advice and projects CERT was involved in during my five years there.

*Q: When you're messing with Big Oil, you're not talking about hit squads, but you must have been very unpopular. You say you were 27, 28.*

GABRIEL: Yes, but ignorance is sometimes bliss. It probably took a na#ve, more inexperienced person to break old taboos, not really knowing any better. The companies didn't really like us, but they ended up dealing with us because just like everywhere else, they were still making gobs of money. To this day, I see many of the company executives of thirty years ago and they remind me of our “Indian wars.”

But over time, we did build trust and respect with them. We got to a point on oil and gas deals where we formed joint work teams between tribe and oil company and worked from the same computer model. This took away most of the contentious points of negotiation and left us with one big question: the fair rate of return to the company, given the risk of the property involved. We found common agreement on what the rate of return should be by evaluating the risk factor associated with finding oil. High risk would warrant a higher rate of return and vice versa. Over time, we developed relationships with oil companies and they got to appreciate the fact that in the long run we were actually helping them find long-term, stable, working relationships with the tribes.

One of the first articles on CERT, and I mentioned it earlier, was in U. S. News and World Report entitled, “OPEC in America's Backyard.” I may have already mentioned an Oliphant

cartoon. It pictures a stoic looking Indian chief standing at the top of a hill, in full Sioux headdress. There's a caricature of an Arab coming up the side of the hill. The Indian is saying, “How,” and the Arab replies, “Easy!” There was some of criticism of CERT but we got through it in good humor and with good work.

(End Tape 1, Side 2)

*Q: This is Tape 2, Side 1. I would think, particularly in the era you're talking about, the Indian tribal leaders, I would assume, were mostly rather traditional at this point. They weren't the Harvard Business School grads and all that, or I assume are coming up now. It must have been difficult dealing with that, wasn't it? Because they're an older, traditional people, and the ins and outs of negotiations are also difficult.*

GABRIEL: Stu, I think it was great training for the Foreign Service, and what I mean by that is it's not unlike what I think Foreign Service officers face overseas with different cultures.

*Q: This was certainly different!*

GABRIEL: I think it starts with building trust and confidence. Once these are established, and with an appreciation for each other's culture and way of operating, you can find a productive way of working together. I'm sure the job at CERT was attractive for me, for the same reasons a Foreign Service officer is attracted to an assignment overseas.

*Q: Did you find that again we're characterizing, but Big Oil. Were they trying to get in and break up the tribal groups?*

GABRIEL: Yes.

*Q: In other words, to split up the tribes and offer a good deal?*

GABRIEL: Yes. Oil company negotiators would come in behind our backs to tribal leaders and suggest that CERT was going to negotiate to the point that the company would walk away and the tribe would end up with no development. We got a lot of that. There was even some minor bribery, if you want to call it that. One company actually gave a turkey at Thanksgiving to every tribal member—three thousand turkeys—if they would vote for their lease at a time that we were telling the tribe that they should hold back and re-think their strategy. We got a lot of pressure from the BIA also.

*Q: Bureau of Indian Affairs.*

GABRIEL: Yes. The Bureau of Indian Affairs. The BIA and the companies would sometimes team up against us. We were not well liked. Press at the time will verify this.

*Q: I would think you'd have... And I suppose the BIA had its proponents who for one reason or another within Congress, too, or not. Did you find...*

GABRIEL: Not much. We had our friends in Congress, who were pretty much sympathetic to our case. There were exceptions, Stu. When we gave testimony concerning the trust responsibilities of the Minerals Management Service, we ran into industry opposition on the Hill and consequently from some members. I remember very vividly, as a young man, sending testimony and a cover letter to Senator John Melcher, chairman of the Indian Affairs Committee. He personally called me and demanded that I retract my letter and testimony. He said that the tribes of Montana (his state) were not in favor of my recommendations and supported a different position. I refused. It was a very difficult time for me then. I remember recently running into the staff director of the committee at the time of my letter to Senator Melcher and asked him if he ever remembered that episode. He smiled and said, “Oh yeah, Senator Melcher was very unhappy with you.”

*Q: You might explain a bit about the Mineral Management Services because this is another considered by others to be a big rip-off for years.*

GABRIEL: Right. It's the accounting branch of the DOI to account for and collect oil and gas royalties for Indian lands and all federal leases. The Service verifies, accounts for and collects the payments of all federal and Indian royalties. It's the subject of much criticism and investigation. Literally billions of dollars of Indian royalties are unaccounted for.

*Q: We're really talking about a tremendous giveaway program.*

GABRIEL: Tens of billions.

*Q: How long did you do this?*

GABRIEL: I was Executive Director of CERT for five years

*Q: By the time you're getting toward the end, how stood things?*

GABRIEL: Well, I think we defined a new era for American Indians and were probably one of the first to concretize the new rights inherent to American Indian Tribes under the American Indian Sovereignty Act. We greatly increased the income derived from energy development, put an end to the old form of leasing and gave Indians the confidence to take development decisions into their own hands. Indian tribes would now be partners in multi-million dollar energy projects. We also set in motion the testing of several legal challenges that gave Indians new tax and legal advantages. I should say that although we were one of the first tactical catalysts to push these new ideas, it really was the Native American Rights Fund that led the legal fight and the Americans for Indian Opportunity (AIO) that set the vision forward to address the issue of sovereignty in the first place. We became implementers of their policy ideas.

*Q: The timing was good, too. These were Carter years, and Carter was paying attention. I mean, would handle all of the shortages, but unfortunately unlike today, there was intense interest in doing something about our dependency on oil.*

GABRIEL: That's right. The timing could not have been better. The second and deeper energy spike hit as CERT was forming, which allowed them much attention and federal resources. CERT grew exponentially and had greater influence in policy issues as a result.

*Q: Did you find after five years and developing this thing that you were getting into...not you, but this scene that the effect of power corrupts and money corrupts. These tribes were getting good money now. Was it in your opinion being well spent, dissipated? What was happening?*

GABRIEL: In terms of the new income tribes were receiving, I think, just like any third world country, they then had to deal with the institutional questions for offering goods and services to their people. What you saw were good tribes and bad tribes. Some tribes were actually turning the money into manufacturing facilities and other forms of diversification. The Apaches were a good example of how to invest their oil proceeds wisely. Some tribes ended up being very corrupt, and the money was squandered. Some northern tribes squandered a lot of their resources. One cannot generalize here, however, and do justice to any individual tribe.

*Q: Jack Abramoff created a tremendous scandal with Indians, and Abramoff was a lobbyist for and against the...*

GABRIEL: He would create a problem for a tribe in order to be hired by the tribe to fix the problem he just created. What you're seeing are the ill effects of the tribes gaining more sophistication. While they gained the understanding that they needed representation in Washington, they still maintained a certain naivet#. Not unlike top corporate executives, who are even worse, thinking they know Washington and then naively hiring the wrong skill mix to attend to their needs.

It was during this time, the late 1970s, that tribes began learning of the importance of campaign contributions, lobbying and political involvement. Early on we advised tribes to

establish political action committees and to develop “tribal war chests” made up of tribal funds for the purpose of contributing to Senate and House campaigns. These were the first political war chests developed by the Tribes. It's somewhat ironic today to see tribes among the biggest contributors to the Democratic and Republican National Committees.

*Q: You were there when the Reagan administration... So you were dealing with the early days.*

GABRIEL: The end of Carter, the beginning of Reagan.

*Q: How did you find the Reagan administration?*

GABRIEL: Excellent. Indian energy issues seemed to transcend presidential administrations. Under Nixon, tribes achieved the concept of Indian self-determination. During the Ford and Carter years, Indian tribes effected a new national policy to aid in the development and protection of their energy resources, and they received federal funding to support their technical development goals. The transition to the Reagan administration was also smooth. Michael Halbouty, a Texas oilman, was the head of energy transition and took a real interest in our work. The new Secretary of Energy, Jim Edwards, was likewise supportive and kept up the policy and funding commitments that preceded him. I remember the tribes affectionately nicknamed him “Jaws,” as he was a dentist by training. Does his name ring a bell for you?

*Q: No, it doesn't.*

GABRIEL: The Secretary continued the support of CERT and actually helped sponsor a task force among the western governors, energy-related companies and the CERT tribes to encourage cooperation in the development of energy resources and to strengthen development procedures in the western U.S. At the time, Bruce Babbitt, then governor of Arizona, co-chaired the task force with Peter MacDonald, the Chairman of Navajo and CERT.

*Q: Did you run into something—I don't come from there—but they called the west or con particularly of... A lot of Americans, not Indians, but Americans who live out there sort of had a visceral dislike of the government and all of that. Did that play at all on the...*

GABRIEL: It was mixed. Today, American Indians have among their ranks both conservatives and liberals. In some cases, the American cowboy influenced the American Indian in the west, in ranching, culture and political viewpoint. In general, it wasn't uncommon to see Indian leaders as Republicans but the masses more Democratic, which was probably a result of the welfare state created by the federal government. There was, however, a common disdain for the Department of Interior for different reasons, as we've discussed.

*Q: Apparently, with considerable justification. It had been one of the great scandals, a scandal that had been going for decades if not centuries. You mentioned the Navajo Nation was the big gorilla in...*

GABRIEL: Absolutely.

*Q: Where did they fit into this thing?*

GABRIEL: They were the leading tribe in the push for changing the relationship with the federal government and within CERT. First of all, the chairman of the Navajo Nation, Peter MacDonald, was bigger than life. He's been called the greatest Indian of the 20th century. Unfortunately, in more recent times, he went to prison for fraud and embezzlement. Back in the early days of CERT however he was the 800-pound gorilla. He was the chairman of CERT and a brilliant maeducated at the University of Oklahoma, an engineer, who came from traditional roots. He was a sheep herder at the age of nine. He lied about his age to become a marine to go to World War II. He became a Navajo code talker, I believe the youngest. As you may know, the Navajo code talkers were famous. As a matter of fact, a movie has been made about them. Their code was the only code during WWII that was

not broken, as they coded and talked in Navajo, an unwritten language that only Navajos speak. For their valor and service to the country, the Navajo code talkers were recently invited to Congress to receive the Congressional silver medal.

Peter MacDonald was therefore a very well known, intelligent Indian leader who did many things to change the course of the American Indian in the 20th century.

*Q: You were doing this until when?*

GABRIEL: '83.

*Q: '83. And I know you're under pressure. Maybe we can pick this up next time.*

GABRIEL: I'd love to.

*Q: OK. Where did you go in '83?*

GABRIEL: In the last year of my service at CERT, I was determined to step down and be replaced by an American Indian. We began a recruitment process and eventually found an American Indian to replace me, David Lester. He is still the executive director of CERT, almost a quarter of a century later.

At that time, I didn't know exactly what I wanted to do, but I eventually concluded that I wanted to run my own business and so I set up Gabriel Associates, a company that provided consulting and lobbying to Indian and energy clients. In summary, two years after establishing my own company I merged with another company, forming Miner, Fraser and Gabriel Public Affairs, Inc. Two to three years after that, I bought out my partners through a leveraged buyout and changed the name of the company to the Madison Public Affairs Group, Inc., which grew into one of the top ten public affairs companies in Washington. Another two years later I sold the company to Earl Palmer Brown (EPB), stayed with EPB for three more years and finally left the business in '93 after a total of ten years.

*Q: I think next time we'll pick this up from '83 to '93.*

GABRIEL: Great.

*Q: While we're here, I'd like you to talk about what a management company does and what you were doing.*

GABRIEL: You know, Stu, one great lesson I learned from two different people in my life is, don't worry about your next job. Just do a great job of where you are today. Opportunities will follow. This lesson led me to never develop a roadmap on my professional future.

I also found that running my own business came naturally and having studied management and business development, such skills would now prove useful in my work. Professionally, I came to know energy policy and lobbying, and developed contacts with American Indian tribes and energy companies, which naturally became the source of my client base. My business then revolved around providing management consulting to tribes in the development of their energy-related businesses or in lobbying for energy companies or tribes on various issues in Washington.

Living in Washington of course also made me more politically and policy-focused. As time passed I became more involved in Democratic party activities, moved more into policy development and eventually into strategic counseling, and away from straight lobbying for clients.

*Q: I was wondering. One final question before we quit today. Energy was and is the preeminent issue, and an awful lot of it has to do for the United States or... We're talking back when you were CERT and even today dealing with foreign powers. The tribes were essentially foreign powers. Was there any crossover where... Were the tribes sitting down there talking to the Saudis or the Nigerians or the Venezuelans.*

GABRIEL: Yes, contacts were made. As a matter of fact, Peter McDonald and the CERT tribal chairmen had one initial meeting with OPEC officials but it came to naught. At the time, there was no interest by foreign governments to be involved with American Indian development. I think one of the OPEC oil ministers spoke at one of our annual meetings.

But you remind me of another point, Stu, that I want to mention. When I became Ambassador in Morocco, a developing country, so many skills from when I worked with American Indians came to the forefront: economic development strategies; understanding diverse cultures; helping to improve weak institutions of government; interacting with government leaders on issues of civil liberties, rule of law and freedom of the press. These were all the same issues that we were confronted with while working with Navajo and other tribes. For me, CERT was like graduate school training in diplomacy for work overseas. In some ways, it was the best training for my work overseas.

*Q: Did you have problems with bright young people, non-Indian, wanting to get in and embrace the Indians, in a way get too eager?*

GABRIEL: Clientitis?

*Q: Clientitis and all that.*

GABRIEL: Not really. I thought the problem was more on the other side of the issue, and I think it's the same with the State Department. Rather than clientitis, I thought we displayed more arrogance in the way in which we interacted with our interlocutors.

*Q: I'm sure there was. OK. We'll pick this up the next time. We'll go into some detail of what you were doing in '83 to '93 as you develop...*

*Q: Today is June 6, 2006 what is known as Anniversary D-Day, and the other is it's the infamous 666 in the Biblical sense supposed to be the day of the mark of the beast or something. Anyway, we'll try to avoid that. '83 to '90. What were you doing then?*

GABRIEL: Also, treasury bonds were issued today. They were yielding 6.66. I'm not really sure what all this means, Stu. At the end of '82, I left the Council of Energy Resource Tribes to set up my own business for reasons I think I described in an earlier tape. As I mentioned, I was originally involved mainly in lobbying. As time went on, I went more into policy development for clients and even management of public affairs strategies. This was the beginning of what was being referred to in our business as “public affairs.” Prior to the use of the phrase “public affairs,” we generally called what we did lobbying, or public relations or media or communications. Public affairs became a profession generally referring to the business of influencing policy. Public relations, or PR, was more apt for selling a product or service, but not a policy. PR was used to sell cars, for instance. Public affairs focused more on issues and how you promote and communicate the opinions and the viewpoints of individual vested interests.

In 1983, I incorporated Gabriel Associates and built up a small company with two people. We represented energy and American Indian clients. I think my yearly revenue was something under $200,000. During this time, Indian gaming would become an issue, and a number of my clients were American Indian tribes that were interested in influencing U.S. policy to protect their legal rights in gaming. I had energy clients as well, and some natural resource clients.

But in addition to going off into my first private business since coming to Washington, another important event happened to me in 1983. My persistence paid off and not only did I get to date Kathleen “Buffy” Linehan, after eight years of trying, but we fell in love, and got married on October 15th of 1983. We've been married now for more than 20 years and have lived together together on three continents and travelled all over the world, having lived a wonderful and fulfilling life together.

*Q: OK, regarding your work, first, on the gaming. As soon as you talked about the way gambling is today, but at that time one gets very nervous when you think about this*

*because you have some very large sharks wandering around in the Mafia or big operators or what have you. Was this a problem when you were doing this, or was this too small?*

GABRIEL: Yes. As we discussed in previous interviews, Indians asserted their legal rights to develop what they had to their advantage, whether it was tax advantages to develop their resources, or tax advantages on cigarettes and liquor or legal advantages that preempted state law to allow them to establish gaming.

Regarding gaming, Indians realized they were stepping on some big toes. Congress stepped in under the auspices of protecting States' rights, fear of “mafia” involvement or even animal rights (horse racing), and declared there would be chaos without a federal mandate of some kind.

The first toes the tribes stepped on were those belonging to Congressman Sam Gibbons of Florida, the powerful chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee. The first attempt by an Indian tribe to establish bingo was on a piece of land in Tampa that the Seminole tribe had purchased, and put into trust status, right across the street from Chairman Gibbon's church's weekly bingo games.

The next biggest toes that tribes stepped on were those of the Nevada gaming interests. At first an opponent to Indian gaming of any kind, the gaming interests, seeing their defeat, decided to join with tribes and figure out how they could become a part of tribal enterprises. But this turnaround didn't happen without several years of a contested lobbying battle between the two sides. The gaming interests' biggest protector in the House was the Democratic whip, Tony Coelho, and he protected their interests with tough tactics and a vengeance. We were trying to get him to come up with good legislation that would protect American Indian tribes, protect the states and create a win/win situation. Eventually the Indians agreed to a federal statute that would be governed by a federal Indian Gaming Commission, which has been a win/win for all parties concerned.

*Q: Did you find yourself being outgunned or threatened as you got into this?*

GABRIEL: Yes. It was an uphill battle for the Indians because you had the big gaming interests fighting against tribal legal rights. In the beginning, Indian tribes wanted no legislation, as they already had the legal right to conduct gaming operations. I was nearly thrown out of Congressman Coelho's office the day I met with him on this issue. So, regarding a threat, I was not threatened per se, but someone as powerful as Coelho being against our clients intimidated me. More fundamental was the effort made by States' attorney generals, who were concerned about States' rights and the economic impact to individual states. I never interacted with the gaming industry but it didn't take me long to realize they were the most influential with members of Congress on the Hill. In the end, Indians had to accept compromise legislation, which was in everybody's interest.

*Q: How about on the energy side? Energy covers a multitude of sins or a positive thing. Anyway, what sort of energy matters do you deal in?*

GABRIEL: Across the board, really, all related to energy policy. Early in my private sector career, I was involved with coal and oil companies, but later I became heavily involved in the re-regulation of the electric utility industry, which resulted in the 1992 Energy Policy Act. At the time, I served as director of the Keystone Energy Project, a project within the Keystone Center, a public policy think tank, headquartered in Keystone, Colorado. Keystone had pioneered a consensus-building process through the development of public policy. It was headed up by Robert W. Craig, who was previously the founding executive director of the Aspen Institute.

Bob is famous in his own right, being one of America's most well know mountain climbers, fly fishermen and skiers. He's also a well known member of the Bohemian Grove, where I have been his guest on a number of occasions. I've known Bob now for thirty years. He still skis about 100 days a year, at the age of 80-something. If Peter MacDonald had the biggest influence on my professional development in the 70s, then Bob did the same in

the 80s. He's a remarkable man, who taught me how to bring all stakeholders to the table and find consensus on contentious issues, and has great appeal and the respect of many policy makers throughout the world. He's the closest person that I have known that can be described as a real Renaissance man. I have now known Bob for almost half of his professional life. We spend at least two weeks a year together. He has become one of my closest friends and mentors.

I directed the Keystone Energy Project, which began by examining a number of policy issues including coal, oil, gas and uranium, as well as international energy policies. Before I took over as Director, we have the good guidance and wit of Frank Potter, the former staff director of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, as our Director for a short period of time. The first issue developed dealt with coordinating oil stocks within the OECD nations. As the DOE toiled with the question of the need for and purpose of a strategic petroleum reserve stockpile (SPR), the question of coordinating this issue with OECD nations also arose, since oil is a fungible commodity and shortfalls among any friendly nation will be directly felt by the others. Under Frank's leadership, we developed a coordination plan among OECD nations on the drawdown policies of the SPR for the purpose of emergency drawdown policies. As I took the Directorship of the Keystone Energy Project I was aided by Rich Rosenzweig, who would become a long time colleague and collaborator on energy policy. Rich was one of the brightest people with whom I've worked. He would eventually become Chief of Staff to Secretary of Energy O'Leary during the Clinton Administration.

Another issue we worked on at the time involved the role of natural gas in the electric utility industry. Prior to this time, natural gas was mainly used as a back up and peaking feed source for electricity. At the request of Natural Gas Association, we put together a series of workshops between natural gas companies and electric utilities to discuss the reliability of using natural gas as a main source of electricity generation. You will recall that this was an idea fostered by Enron. They wanted to prove they could guarantee long-term supplies of natural gas for mega-projects in electricity and other forms of natural gas byproducts. We

now know that Enron was nothing more than a derivative company making promises to guarantee gas they didn't own. But the debate continues on how to use natural gas more to solve our nation's problems today.

This led us naturally into our biggest projects at Keystone, as did the issue for many of our clients, the re-regulation of the electric utility industry, which culminated in the Energy Policy Act of 1992.

*Q: You mentioned Keystone. What was the Keystone organization?*

*Q: I first went to Keystone, Colorado in 1978 when I was with CERT. I was and still am an avid skier and went there on a regular basis to ski. I used to go to Denver every other Thursday for technical meetings with our CERT staff located there, and would then spend the weekends at Keystone. During that process I met the president of Keystone Resort, Robert Maynard, who later left Keystone to establish Sundance Ski Resort for Robert Redford and then onto Aspen, where he was the president for nearly a decade before retiring. He introduced me to Bob Craig, the head of the Keystone Center. Keystone hosted long-term study efforts of an invited group of people representing all vested interests of a particular issue, such as industry executives, state and federal regulators, environmentalists, consumer advocates, etc. A lot of Keystone's work was in the environmental field. When they retained the services of Gabriel Associates in '83, we moved more broadly into energy from a point already begun by Bob Craig.*

*Q: Did you find in your dealing with gambling issues, with energy and all, how political was this as far as national politics? In other words, was there a Republican side, a Democratic side, or did it depend on the politician's district?*

GABRIEL: No. I didn't feel as though gaming had a political side, either Republican or Democratic, to it. I do believe that weak Indian policy today is a result of the Republicans fostering a policy of Indian termination, meaning to terminate the treaty status of Indians and force them into the mainstream of the American system. Democrats wanted to give

them the minimum necessary to satisfy their conscience. President Nixon advocated the pro-Indian policy of self-determination. President Eisenhower supported the Indian Termination Act, to do away altogether with Indian tribal reservations. The Democrats typically kept Indians poor and lacked any forward-thinking policy to solve the enormous social and economic needs of the Indians. So I didn't see it as good on either side. I will tell you, however, that I became more conservative as I experienced American Indian policies. The Secretary of Interior under President Reagan was Jim Watt, who said, “You don't have to go to the Soviet Union to see the vestiges of socialism. You can see it right here in this country by visiting an Indian reservation.” This was not a politically correct thing to say, but he wasn't wrong in what he observed.

*Q: Well, then you were doing this with the Keystone Project. First place, was the greenhouse effect which apparently was getting worse and worse, but was that an issue when you were starting this in the '80s?*

GABRIEL: Yes, very much so, somewhat indirectly, however. We couldn't really develop good energy policy without environmental representation around the table. Remember, we were involving all vested interests in the formulation of policies, including environmentalists, consumers, companies small and big, state regulators and federal regulators. Anybody with a vested interest in energy was involved. Among them was a very strong environmental community.

The first issue was not climate change but rather acid rain. It preceded CO2. So the first issue we dealt with was acid rain, and our work led to the acid rain provisions of the Clean Air Act of 1990. In our work with the Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) we advocated a consensus that proposed credits for emissions trading. Today, emissions trading is a widely supported policy in dealing with CO2 issues concerning global warming.

*Q: The time period we're talking abut is also the Reagan period.*

GABRIEL: Both the Reagan and Bush 1 years.

*Q: When Reagan came in, he appeared to be either oblivious or didn't pay much attention to acid rain or any environmental...*

GABRIEL: To energy policy. Remember, President Carter declared a war on energy.

*Q: Yeah.*

GABRIEL: Carter went after huge projects and really mobilized and created the DOE. Reagan, on the other hand, advocated a policy of abolishing the DOE, and it wasn't until Undersecretary of Interior Don Hodel succeeded Jim Edwards did we see a realization of the need for a robust energy policy. Don Hodel was a very competent secretary.

*Q: Did you find working on this Keystone but also the whole energy thing that you were dealing with hostility or indifference on the part of...*

[crosstalk]

GABRIEL: The Reagan administration...

*Q: ...and also the political establishment.*

GABRIEL: This is a great question, Stu. I think what we saw from the right, meaning industry and conservative Republican members, was a lot of skepticism of Keystone. At first, there was not a lot of support for a consensus-building process that included traditional enemies. Even the Left, such as the environmental community, viewed us with some skepticism and criticized us for receiving industry money for the projects we were running. They were, however, more accustomed to consensus-building as a process in the development of public policy. So here we were with two skeptical sides coming to the table. When both sides disliked us, we took it to mean we were doing our job, since our job was to facilitate a consensus or convergence of opinion. In 1992, the Keystone Energy

Project received the National Energy Resource Organizational Award for Energy Policy. During this time, the Keystone Energy Project made a good name for itself, and helped to effect two pieces of legislation: the Clean Air Act of 1990 and the Energy Policy Act of 1992.

*Q: From your perspective, how were we treating during this period several sources, potential sources of energy? One is wind, the other is solar, and the third is nuclear.*

GABRIEL: Great question. During this time, alternative energy, except for nuclear, went by the wayside. At the end of the Carter administration, there was a bill passed, its acronym was PURPA, which forced electric utilities to take any electricity produced from low head hydro and other small alternative energy sources, under 50 megawatts, I think. It spawned a new industry which eventually came to be known as the independent power producers. One such example is the American Energy Services Company (AES), which was started by two former FEA officials, Roger Sant and Dennis Bakke.

Because of Three Mile Island and Carter's anti-nuclear policy, the nuclear industry died. All efforts begun under Carter's war on energy went by the wayside during the Reagan years. In 1986 we hit a floor on oil prices, going below $10/barrel. This was not an encouragement to pursue alternative energy policies.

*Q: Working on this, how did you... By the time you finished working on particularly the energy field, where were you coming out as an individual thinking about the system?*

GABRIEL: I can talk to you about a couple of things. One, I can talk to you about energy policy and what I was thinking, but also on developing my company. During this time, I was thinking about the field of communications and how best to develop a public affairs practice in Washington. That's when we started perfecting the business of public affairs, combining lobbying, policy analysis, media and communications, advocacy advertising, grassroots and a new program that I trademarked, GrassTops, which targeted top opinion leaders in a given congressional district to make them aware of and advocate for a

given policy. These integrated public affairs services allowed our company to distinguish itself from other lobbyists and PR and lobbying companies. We were mainly known for GrassTops, policy development and some lobbying in the fields of energy, environment, tax and trade.

*Q: I sort of wonder when you had time to deal with energy.*

GABRIEL: My thoughts on energy policy at the time were just coalescing. On the one hand, I believed deeply that the concept of energy independence was a pipe dream or a sound bite for politicians. Oil was too fungible and our demand was increasing too rapidly to ever see America independent of foreign sources of oil. We needed a better Middle Eastern policy as much as an oil policy. Also, given environmental concerns, I could not see how we could deal with our energy future without trying to find a safe means for developing our nuclear capacity.

[crosstalk]

(Transcriptionist's note: Start Side 2)

GABRIEL: Yes, we need lobbyists, but we need lobbyists who are competent in their policy fields. They...

[tape dysfunction]

GABRIEL: Lobbyists have to have substance in my opinion. I think the days of simply opening doors to get access to and therefore change policy is obsolete. I believed at the time if we were going to deal in the issues of trade, the environment, energy, and even in foreign policy, we were going to have to be experts. I did not believe that to have a skill in communications, for instance, was good enough. I didn't want a company with flacks who did not have depth on their subject matter. As I mentioned, we invented GrassTops and eventually had a fifty-state network of consultants assisting us in identifying top opinion

leaders. But we retained our substantive knowledge in the Washington office so that we could present our positions on foreign policy, tax, trade and energy in a convincing, competent manner. The company grew as a result of that management model.

*Q: A couple of things. One, in dealing with a company, you're going and they're hiring you, but you're saying, "We're not going to be flacks, so just present your side. We want a policy thing," when you're up against the flacks that were hired by the company. This has been a long established process indeed, and these are people if they're promoting cigarettes...you don't smoke...*

GABRIEL: We lost some and we won some. During that time, Philip Morris was my client, one of my biggest clients. General Electric was a client. Many of the major electric utilities became clients. We had several Fortune 100 companies and also high-tech companies such as General Atomics, the maker of the Predator. But we lost some, Stu, because they didn't like our approach or they felt safer hiring the established company with the traditional approach. If a company hired an established company, the executive could not be blamed for any mistakes when they occurred. I remember we pitched the plastics association for a very large contract. We were one of the two finalists. In the end, the reason why we lost was that they weren't sure whether we were "established enough" to handle a traditional client with a traditional membership. Even our client Philip Morris took our trademarked program, GrassTops, and hired one of our competitors to "diversify" their consultant base on various issues. Unfortunately, you cannot legally protect an idea, you can only trademark a name. In spite of the downsides, by 1988 we were one of the top 10 public affairs companies in Washington.

*Q: Washington's for anybody coming here, particularly a foreign embassy, they're got to learn what makes Washington go around. It certainly isn't the State Department. Just for...*

GABRIEL: That is part of my business today. My profession evolved from straight lobbying, to public affairs, to strategic counseling today. It has been a natural transition

to strategic counseling from these other two areas. This newly identified business was a natural extension of my experience and professional practice. Essentially, instead of a team of lobbyists, media specialists, policy analysts and the like in my own company, I advise countries and companies on how Washington works and after examining their interests, recommend and manage a strategic plan for them. In some cases, I actually hire and manage outside lobbyists and other public affairs specialists in the pursuit of their goals.

There was a country that was mentioned in the news recently. It was really vilified in the press and in Congress over their purchase of a strategic concession in the U.S. Two years prior to this incident I recommended that this country have an active public affairs strategy in Washington, and I said, “If you don't define yourself in Washington, somebody else will define you.” At the time, they thought wrongly that if they were a good friend to the U.S. and kept a low profile, they would not be harmed in Washington. It proved not to be the case.

*Q: I know. It's just incredible.*

GABRIEL: But you can also waste your money in Washington, and that's what gives our business a bad name. There's another country with a big profile in Washington that's not afraid to put millions of dollars into its public affairs strategy. They are doing no better than the country that wanted no profile. Developing a good strategy is the first and most important step in Washington. It must be tested and demonstrated over time to make sure you've developed the right messaging as well. But some wealthy countries are like big companies: they hire the biggest names and think that the old way of doing business in Washington is the safest.

*Q: One of the factors in this, and I've been interviewing people who've worked for them and getting a... So somebody looking at this collection eventually will get a feel for what makes foreign policy. The think tanks. You know, you have the Brookings Institute on*

*the moderate left, and you've got the American Enterprise Institute on the right and other ones...*

GABRIEL: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, (CSIS), for which I'm a Visiting Fellow, is in the middle.

*Q: During this time how did you deal with the think tanks?*

GABRIEL: During the company's early years?

*Q: Yeah.*

GABRIEL: That's a great question. Think tanks weren't as prevalent a part of strategy as they are today. In some ways, we attempted to be our own think tank. In one instance at Keystone, we worked with them to propose new policies to Congress and the executive branch. This was my first foray into the think tank business. Today, any good public affairs strategy involves a plan for dealing with and bringing to think tanks issues of importance to our clients.

*Q: We're talking about eras. Washington is full of eras, and this is an era, sort of the Reagan-Bush.*

GABRIEL: Exactly.

*Q: How did you find Congress during this period? Democratic Congress. But the staff, the congressional staff, the committee staffs...*

GABRIEL: Great question.

*Q: How did you find them...*

GABRIEL: Let me tell you. A congressman once told me something. He said, “Ed, the first time you lie to me is the last time I'll see you.”

*Q: Yeah.*

GABRIEL: In those days, I always found an open door as long as I maintained a reputation for telling the truth and likewise going the extra mile in letting the member of Congress know what the down side would be if he took the position I was advocating. Being a friend and building trust and confidence are first and foremost in this job.

*Q: Basically it's not the hard sell.*

GABRIEL: My philosophy was to be frank and forward: “Here's why we think you should do this, Mr. Congressman. There are some down sides, and there are some vested interests that will oppose you, and here's who they are. But here's why we believe it's the right thing to do.” I counseled my staff to operate this way. I always said I came to this town with only my integrity, and it's the only thing I want to make sure I leave with.

But you asked me a deeper question: How did I find them? Times have changed since 1994. Remember the days of George Mitchell, the days of Tip O'Neill, the days of Bob Michael and Bob Dole? Those were days when policy, especially foreign policy, was debated with respect for one another's opinion and camaraderie. There was a real sense that America was first and politics second. There were deep friendships between Democrats and Republicans. During my confirmation hearings before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I was introduced by Pete Domenici, a Republican, and Wendell Ford, a Democrat, and I did that to make a point about my strong bipartisan feelings when it came to representing the United States of America overseas. But 1994 represented a turning point.

*Q: This was a major turning point in...*

GABRIEL: 1994 is a huge turning point. The Gingrich Doctrine changed the way of doing business on Capitol Hill. It has been very partisan and very divisive ever since. Unfortunately, it seems that politicians generally care more about winning elections and making their competition sound and look “un-American.” In the 1980s and early '90s, everyone knew me as a Democrat, but I wouldn't think twice about supporting a Republican such as Pete Domenici, because he was a good and competent person. It was a different world then, Stu, a very different world. Since 1994, being a Democrat has been a detriment to lobbying. No major corporate office in Washington hired Democrats after 1994, and several fired the Democrats they had under not so subtle orders from Tom DeLay and Republican deputies.

*Q: Did you find... Was there a difference in dealing with... Let me rephrase that. What about the staff of the committees? These were sometimes considered a real power in the legislative branch. How did you find them in that time, and the people?*

GABRIEL: Pretty much the way I've described it. Remember, aside from the Foreign Relations staff you had very distinct Republican and Democratic staffs. Foreign policy on the Senate side is developed in a bipartisan manner even today, thanks to Lugar and Biden and Hagel. We're lucky to have them in the Senate. And now, since Senator Jesse Helms, the former Foreign Relations Committee Chair, is gone, it's really back to putting America first, not Republicans first, as Jesse Helms seemed to do.

[telephone interruption]

*Q: During this time, was there a change when George Bush, Sr. came on board?*

GABRIEL: No. I think the two watersheds during my time in Washington were Watergate and 1994 with Gingrich. Those are the two things that impacted Congress the most. One, there were legal ramifications from Watergate that affected Congress, but a major sea change also came into the House of Representatives in the post Watergate period. This

included a large number of newly elected, young and very bright Democratic members, about my age, who replaced older, Republican members. Many of these became known as “post-Watergate members”. The second sea change come in 1994 with Gingrich, who had a “take no prisoners approach” to policy making. His agenda was going to be pushed to the detriment of others, and there would be no compromises. The Republicans won the house in 1994, so they went from a good person in Bob Michael to Newt Gingrich and Tom Delay, known as “the Hammer”.

*Q: It's a frightening setup*

GABRIEL: I did not notice much difference from the Reagan to the Bush transition. At the end of the '80s, I became more involved in foreign affairs and policy. My first activity was in 1987 or 1989, I cannot remember exactly, when I became a founding member of the American Task Force for Lebanon (ATFL), when George Bush was taking over the presidency. I really admired his foreign policy agenda. He had a solid strategy for bringing the Arab/Israeli dispute to a resolution, he handled the Soviet transition to Russia with great deft and seemed to have an extremely talented and competent foreign policy team.

*Q: I've been doing these interviews for about 20 years, and George Bush as the president probably, and a little bit in competition with Richard Nixon, but George Bush comes across as being the most competent.*

GABRIEL: In my opinion, I would also say he and Nixon were in fact the most competent. Even in his worst moments, such as Tiananmen Square, George Bush took decisive foreign policy decisions.

*Q: Oh, yeah. Tiananmen Square and Peoples Republic of China. There wasn't really much we could do.*

GABRIEL: No. Some pundits suggested that we should have cut off our engagement with China at that point, but I thought his policy of “constructive engagement” was in our country's best interest.

*Q: I thought it too, particularly the handling of the collapse of the Soviet Union and the avocation of Germany by stepping to one side and not getting out there and crowing. It was handled very well. You mentioned you get involved in foreign affairs. During much of this time we're talking about '80s and all, you're having this...I don't know if you want to call it a civil war going on in Lebanon...but certainly reminds one almost of Baghdad. Iraq... How is this affecting you?*

GABRIEL: It affected my thinking as an Arab-American of Lebanese heritage. My political interest in foreign affairs is probably largely driven by my heritage. Until 1972, I really didn't appreciate the full spectrum of foreign affairs other than the effects of the Vietnam War on college-aged Americans, although I remember at the Washington seminar during my junior year in college I was very forward in pushing my views on the Middle East in our meetings with members of Congress. Starting in '72, however, with the oil embargo and my subsequent move to Washington, I recognized the growing dynamic between Arab countries with oil reserves and its effect on the U.S. economy and our policies. As the civil war in Lebanon continued, I also came to appreciate the importance of how, as a Lebanese-American, I could become more involved in ways I could be helpful. When ATFL was being formed by Peter Tanous and Tanya Rahall, among other prominent Americans, I was asked to become one of its founding members.

*Q: Were these Lebanese Americans?*

GABRIEL: Yes.

*Q: What sort of Lebanese-American community is there? Who were some of the people?*

GABRIEL: The Lebanese-American community represents 40% of the Arab-American community of America, so they're the largest part of this ethnic group, and most Lebanese-Americans are Christians. There were essentially two waves of Lebanese to America. The first was during the Turkish Empire, at the turn of the 20th century, the late 1800s and early 1900s. The second wave was post '72 and was due largely to the civil war in Lebanon. To my knowledge, the second wave contained more Lebanese of Muslim heritage than the first wave, which was almost entirely Christian. The ATFL is made up of top opinion leaders from across the U.S. in business, government, the entertainment industry, academia and the non-profit world. ATFL does not concern itself with grassroots constituencies involving large numbers of Lebanese-Americans. Among the better known members of the ATFL are George Mitchell, Joe Jacobs, the founder of Jacobs Engineering and Casey Kasem, the famous deejay, among others.

*Q: Oh yeah. He was on the Armed Forces radio dominated and was known around the world.*

GABRIEL: Casey happens to be a Druze. Former Ambassador Tom Nassif, who was the U.S. Ambassador to Morocco before me, is the chairman of ATFL. Joe Hager, Hager Slacks, Helen Thomas, the list goes on. The purpose was to gain national policy attention through such important people of Lebanese heritage so that our voices could be heard among the competing policy voices in Washington, and to bridge a better understanding between the U.S. and Lebanon. It is quite heartening when I often hear someone tell me that their life was affected by a Lebanese-American. I so often hear, “There was a kid down the street I knew...” or “There was a guy who had a grocery store...,” or, “One of my best friends...” There was generally good will toward the Lebanese for years, but not so much anymore, and it became worse as terrorism was found to be stemming from Lebanon and American soldiers were killed in Lebanon. It became apparent that the positive good will toward the Lebanese-American community that lasted over generations could become tainted. ATFL aims to correct such misunderstanding.

*Q: Did you go to Lebanon? Did you get any feel about...*

GABRIEL: My first visit to Lebanon was in 1994 with the ATFL as part of an official delegation, and I have gone almost every year since, except for when I was an ambassador. Our first visit was a very public event, as few Americans were coming to Lebanon at that time. Bob Pelletreau, the assistant secretary of the Near East at the time, wanted us to go, and he saw our visit as being helpful to the State Department. That first trip was fascinating, really an unbelievable trip. It was the first time in 100 years that anybody on my mother's side of the family had set foot in Lebanon and 85 years on my father's side.

*Q: Let's treat up to... During the...*

GABRIEL: '93, I think it's a great time...

*Q: '93, up to this. Here you had a civil war, I guess is best...*

GABRIEL: Now we're into Lebanon, yes.

*Q: ...Going on. How did this Lebanese association see this, and was there a... I would have thought that most of the people would have been on the Christian side and not as much on the...*

GABRIEL: Michael Berry, after whom the Detroit Airport is named, was a member of ATFL, and he's Shiite. ATFL was multi-confessional and that was part of its strength. The organization contained Sunnis, Shiites, Druze and Christians of many denominations. We prided ourselves in being multi-confessional, something that no other U.S. Lebanese organization is. There were plenty of confessional groups, for instance, pro-Maronite or Christian groups. They actually had a very parochial agenda to foster a Maronite agenda, for instance, rather than a wider, more universal policy towards the U.S.-Lebanon relationship. Such groups did not see even how the peace process affects Lebanon. In

several cases, many of these groups are anti-Palestinian, anti-Syrian and anti-Arab. The Christians especially saw a divide between themselves as “Phoenicians” and the others as “Arabs.” At the ATFL, our biggest disputes didn't pit one confession against the other. Rather they pitted first-, second- and third-generation Lebanese against immigrants. The immigrants always bring their confessional baggage to the ATFL and see our work through their own family, tribal and religious paradigms. It created some very animated conversations at ATFL.

*Q: I'm sure you did.*

GABRIEL: Those of us who had been born in America had an altruistic belief that our purpose was to bridge the bilateral gap. But the immigrant members of ATFL had more vested interests and in most cases still have family members living in Lebanon and being affected by the confessional politics there. As was the case at the Keystone Center, ATFL knew it was doing the right thing when it was accused of not supporting one confessional against another. Another important decision of ATFL is noninvolvement in the internal politics of Lebanon. We do not want to be dragged into their parochial fights. We refuse to offer opinions about their internal policies and politics. We are concerned with humanitarian aid. ATFL has been most instrumental in advocating for the congressional aid packages to Lebanon since the '90s in the form of grants to NGOs and universities. We have also gained a better understanding of Lebanon's problems, which has helped us bring a better policy understanding to the administration and to Congress.

*Q: You had two external forces that were in Lebanon at the time. What was it, PLO where they...*

GABRIEL: Yes.

*Q: And the other was Hamas, apparently Iranian supported.*

GABRIEL: Hezbollah.

*Q: Hezbollah. And these were not groups that were really looking out for Lebanese interests.*

GABRIEL: Some Palestinians are refugees in Lebanon. They have not been treated well in Lebanon. Their numbers amount to more than 10% of the total Lebanese population, so there is also a legitimate concern about their status remaining refugees and not being eligible for citizenship. The Hezbollah presents a dilemma. If you talk with their political operatives, members of the parliament—and I have— there is a split among them. Some say that they put Lebanon above their own factional politics, while others clearly put their tribal interests first . The more radical military arm seems hell-bent on asserting its agenda on all Lebanese and has no interest in promoting peace in the region with Israel. Hezbollah has tremendous power and influence over Lebanon, more than it should.

*Q: How did you find working on this committee? How did you find the State Department and National Security Council? Were they supportive?*

GABRIEL: Yes.

*Q: How did they work with you?*

GABRIEL: We have been generally respected by various administrations. For instance, in the Bush and Clinton administrations, both assistant secretaries of State, Ed Djerejian and Bob Pelletreau, were very supportive of our efforts. This continued under Secretary Powell and Condi Rice. We are non-partisan and moderate in our thinking. It is obvious to all that we put America's interests first. We generally support U.S. positions, and consequently, find synergy together.

*Q: What sort of response were you getting from the Lebanese on all sides?*

GABRIEL: Well, like I said, our first visit therit was like we were heads of state with the way they treated us. Lebanon understands the importance of ATFL to them and every

Lebanese ambassador often credits his own success in large part to the ATFL. Many other Arab-American groups have tried to copy our vision. Palestinian-Americans recently set up the American Task Force for Palestine. The Moroccans are currently doing the same.

*Q: And also...*

GABRIEL: The vision of ATFL provided us with great influence on the Lebanese mandate.

*Q: In a way...*

GABRIEL: ...with the Lebanese.

*Q: ...the Lebanese experience replicates in many ways the Jewish experience.*

GABRIEL: Well...

*Q: But in a certain extent, the Jewish experience really comes from Europe, but into the commercial and world particularly of the Lebanese on the Jewish side, it's commercial but also entertainment and media. Did you find that as you went on, could you get your act together? What elements within Lebanon sort of maybe we better get our act together? Were you able to...*

GABRIEL: Who knows? There are a couple of things I think we can point our finger at and say we really moved the needle. We've met with every president of the U.S. and Lebanon, every important policy maker in either country, as well as held meetings with the President of Syria. I have met with President Bashar al-Assad five times. U.S. foreign aid packages are among ATFL's most important achievements. Reinstituting direct flights into Lebanon was one of our most prominent successes. Impressing upon Lebanon the importance of deploying its own troops in the south was an important policy we advocated, as was impressing on the U.S. the importance of reinstating U.S. military support for the Lebanese military in order for it to regain its control over its territory. More than such tangible achievements, however, are the important messages we have been able to

convey between both sides. There have been many misunderstandings between the Lebanese and the U.S. and the U.S. and Syria. We have been a bridge for a strong message of peace and comprehensive bilateral settlements.

*Q: You can make notes or you can add them when you get the draft you can add. I was mentioning the Jewish power in the United States. What about the Israeli lobby, the AIPAC and all? Israel and Lebanon had been at way during the early '80s. Was there...*

GABRIEL: I work with AIPAC from time to time, and I find that the cooperation with them varies by Middle Eastern country and the issues between each country and Israel.

When it comes to Lebanon, Christians work closely with the Israelis and with the Israeli lobby here. There's a lot of connections between them. A right wing element of the Christian community collaborates closely with the Israeli lobby. Generally, I have had respectful debates with AIPAC on matters we do not agree on, and I see in them an interest to learn more about Lebanon. The Israeli lobby will respect anyone who respects the right of Israel to exist. Everything else is a fair debate with them. The Israeli lobby is known to not take any prisoners, but there's a lot of space for a moderate group like ATFL to work with AIPAC because there is mutual respect. When I went as president of ATFL to Israel, I met with Shimon Perez, Yasser Arafat and others. I was received positively and in the spirit of cooperation. There is plenty to disagree on, but depending on how potential adversaries approach one another and keep the arguments professional and not personal, understanding and compromise are possible.

Let me jump to a country like Morocco. The relationship here is very positive and more advanced than any other Arab country. This is partly due to Morocco's history with Moroccan Jews. Moroccan Jews are the second largest ethnic population in Israel after Russians. King Mohammed V protected his Jewish subjects during World War II. Actually, some of the most supportive organizations of Morocco's agenda in the U.S. are Jewish or pro-Israeli groups. There is a genuine interest to help one another.

Let's look at the other Arab countries and regions. With the Gulf, for instance, the Israeli lobby has little contact, although behind the scenes, Israel and some Gulf countries work closely together on intelligence issues. I was also with Rabbi David Rosen from Jerusalem last month. He is the head of the international committee of the American Jewish Committee. We had a most constructive conversation that was filled with understanding of both sides of the issue.

*Q: This is always one of the... The American immigrant community or the hyphenated American, whatever you want to call it, is a very peculiar community. It often has much stricter sets of ideas which were imbedded when they left the country.*

GABRIEL: I'm going to have to stop. I have another meeting.

*Q: All right. We'll pick this up the next time...I'll let you figure out where we want to go.*

GABRIEL: We may pick up at '93.

*Q: You can also fill in later.*

*Q: OK. Today is the 29th of June 2006. Where would you like to start?*

GABRIEL: Wherever you want to, Stu.

*Q: OK. Well, '93. You had been involved with the Clinton campaign.*

GABRIEL: In '92, I volunteered to organize an effort to get energy industry support for President Clinton during the '92 election.

*Q: Had Al Gore scared the hell out of them by talking about the environment?*

GABRIEL: Yes, he had. As it turned out, the effort to bring the energy industry to support President Clinton was very difficult. We were much more successful when the polling

was going in the President's favor in September. The energy industry started deciding to support the winner. In '96 it was more difficult, as a lot of companies were nervous about Al Gore. I felt Al Gore needed to do more to entice them into our camp. But I discovered that we were comfortable in our positions and that maybe it wasn't so bad having big oil against us. We were highly successful, however, in reaching alternative energy executives and smaller traditional companies, which had come to respect the Clinton agenda. We signed up more than 200 energy CEOs for Clinton in 1996.

*Q: Did you get the feeling during the first time, the energy business, were they looking ahead or was it, "Let's keep things the way they are." In other words, their energy comes from a variety of sources, and I wonder whether you felt the energy business was particularly responsive or not?*

GABRIEL: No, I don't think the energy industry was responsive at all in those days. I think they're paying more lip service today. Their seriousness about looking at the future and the problems of oil demand and supply may be more real today. I think that with some of those companies that's the truth, but back in the '90s it wasn't. They were holding firm to their old positions. There were differences between big oil companies and independent oil companies, as well as alternative energy companies.

*Q: Looking at the energy business from your perspective, did you feel that we were letting time go by without really looking at alternate energy and developing? I remember Jimmy Carter made a big point of it at one time, and all of a sudden it died away as soon as the oil price changed. It's not a problem that's going to go away. I think it's gotten acute now.*

GABRIEL: Yes, Stu. I think that America has squandered time to solve this problem. First of all, I don't believe we can ever have energy independence. I don't think this notion since the days of President Ford to have a policy of energy independence, is realistic, and to say that we want independence from the Arabs I think is more of a political statement. Our demand is still far outstripping the new supplies we are finding from non-Arab sources.

We are actually consuming more oil than we have found replacements for. There're about three trillion barrels of oil known in the world, and actually there're only two trillion absolutely proven. The third trillion is classified as a possible resource. We've consumed one trillion of those barrels of oil since the beginning of oil development until the present day. We will consume another trillion in the next 20 to 25 years. We hope we have another trillion after that. How many years that leaves us, we don't know because we don't know whether and how much is proven. Even in the best of cases, what that means is that we've got 20 years to really try to figure out our energy future. The biggest demand for oil in the coming decades will be for transportation. As the third world becomes more industrialized, the demand for autos and trucks is going to increase enormously and the demand for transportation fuel is going to increase exponentially. We cannot afford the luxury of using oil or gas to power our electricity plants. We're going to need more fuel-efficient cars. We will need nuclear and clean coal energy and alternative technologies to act as a bridge to the next generation of energy. And we will need to be more demand constraint driven. So rather than energy independence, I think we're really looking at taking a finite amount of oil in the next 20 to 50 years and spreading it out as far as we can, while we expeditiously develop alternatives, including nuclear.

*Q: We keep talking about the United States, but you've got Europe, Japan. Looking at the energy thing, do you see promising thing... I mean, if you look at it coming from other countries?*

GABRIEL: First of all, the statistics I gave are global, and when you say do I see promising things, you mean technology-wise?

*Q: Yeah.*

GABRIEL: Yes, I think that Japan, France, the major industrials, have a real interest in looking at fusion energy and hydrogen technology. America has been a partner with the Europeans and Japanese in harnessing fusion energy. In this regard, we haven't

supported our laboratories enough to gain the leading edge in energy development technologies. We have to spend much more of our money on science-related technologies, including the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle. Our science budgets are going down, not up, and we'll really have to focus on new environmental and energy technologies. The greatest asset we have in America is our national laboratories, but we need to support them more.

*Q: As you got into the Clinton campaign, was there much of a look about... Obviously, win the election, but Clinton made the remark, "It's the economy, stupid," or at least that was the theme. Obviously, energy was a part of it. Was there really much talk during the campaign about energy?*

GABRIEL: There was a lot talk in the campaign about energy. It wasn't a very big issue politically in either '92 or '96, so it wasn't a major agenda item. Today is different. We're in trouble. That fateful day I described earlier is a little bit closer, so I think it's more of a political issue today than it was in the '90s. The price of oil cannot remain stagnant and as demand puts pressure on the need for oil, prices will increase, causing it to be a political issue.

*Q: During the election, any stories about how things went from your perspective?*

GABRIEL: Well, I don't have any juicy stories.

*Q: Not necessarily juicy, but problems that came up, or issues?*

GABRIEL: No. I think the most interesting thing was the President's desire to find competent people in his new cabinet, and it was very exciting when Hazel O'Leary was selected as secretary of Energy. At the time, she was with Northern States Power Company and probably in line to be the future president of that company. I had worked with her at the FEA, you will recall, and kept close to her since 1974. We were good friends and as I mentioned, I had recommended her to the transition team. Getting her

briefed up and into her position was exciting. I have been fortunate to have her as one of my greatest mentors in my life and in my opinion, she was one of the most qualified secretaries of Energy.

(Transcriptionist's note: End Tape 2)

*Q: This is Tape 3, Side 1 with Edward Gabriel.*

GABRIEL: As I mentioned, Hazel was a very competent secretary of Energy and tackled some of the toughest issues within her department. She was responsible for negotiating the Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) deal with Russia, which decommissioned a third of the Russian nuclear warheads and de-enriched the uranium for sale on the electric power market, thus providing Russia with more than $10 billion in badly needed funds to pull through their economic transition. She also fought and won the “no first test” nuclear option, which states that the US would not be the first to test nuclear bombs. She was an advocate for the National Laboratories and the expedited disposal of nuclear waste.

*Q: The big problem on nuclear was one of safety after Three Mile Island and Chernobyl which basically brought our nuclear...*

GABRIEL: In '79 when the Three Mile Island incident occurred, nuclear energy went down the tubes. Chernobyl sealed its fate. It really has not resurrected yet. It's only now that some environmentalists are beginning to team up with the energy industry and call for a fresh look at nuclear. It's a very interesting opportunity now. There have been some interesting new technologies for nuclear energy development, like gas-cooled reactors and other technologies, but it's going to take a long time to get a new generation of nuclear power plants off the ground.

*Q: Has there been any progress on disposal of used...*

GABRIEL: No. There hasn't been. You put your finger on the problem. Nuclear waste is the single most important issue to get the debate moving forward. We have yet to see a congressional consensus on this issue. Other countries have dealt with this issue through reprocessing and advanced storage techniques. Also, a global view on this issue could bring countries together on a common platform to protect fuel enrichment and the disposal of waste. For instance, if the countries of the world agreed on a common enrichment center, we could deal with proliferation better. Same with reprocessing and storing waste. Countries like Russia are dependent on the nuclear industry and would cooperate if they saw an economic return.

*Q: Clinton is elected. What happens with you?*

GABRIEL: Clinton's elected. After working with the transition of Energy under Hazel O'Leary, I decided I did not want to go into the administration, and wanted to pursue other opportunities. I was finishing the earn-out period with Earl Palmer Brown, whom I had sold my company to. Thanks to a dear and close friend, Bob Hanfling, I got an opportunity to go to work for the CONCORD Company of Denver, Colorado, which was a privately owned conglomerate principally involved in processing and trading uranium, with an array of other high technology companies under its umbrella. It also owned the Colorado Rockies baseball team. The owner was Oren Benton.

I worked for CONCORD for two years until my wife and I decided to move to Lausanne, Switzerland in 1995, due to my wife, Kathleen's promotion. She had been the head of the Washington office of Philip Morris and was being promoted to head of corporate affairs for half the world including Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. So now for the third time in my career, I set up my own company, The Gabriel Group, with offices in Lausanne and Washington. This was the beginning of a new career that focused on strategic counseling with regard to U.S. policy and public affairs strategies for U.S. companies in the fields of electricity, high technology, defense and consumer goods.

*Q: Before we move to Morocco and Lausanne, let's talk about the Russian nuclear issue and Concord...*

GABRIEL: At CONCORD, I established a new Office of Corporate Affairs which was run out of Washington, so I did not have to move to Denver. CONCORD was a relatively large uranium and diversified holding company. I established other offices in Brussels, Moscow and Hong Kong. The most important issue to CONCORD, and the main reason why they hired me, was to find a solution to an anti-dumping order that was placed on Russian uranium imports.

CONCORD made most of its money trading Russian uranium. The anti-dumping order had the potential to severely limit its business operations. When I took over the dossier on this issue, the Russians had entered into a suspension agreement with the United States that suspended the dumping order and allowed a very small amount of uranium into the U.S. but at very high prices, effectively still shutting them out of the American market. During this time, I got to know the Russians well, including the Minister for Atomic Energy, Viktor Mikhailov.

Coincidentally, Hazel O'Leary, the new secretary of Energy, was assigned non-proliferation issues as part of the Gore-Chernomyrdin Commission. Hazel's counterpart would become Mikhailov. Neither of them liked each other. Hazel looked at Victor as a crude Soviet-era apparatchik who refused to see the world in new terms. Hazel wasn't wrong. He once said the most beautiful sight he ever saw was a nuclear mushroom cloud bursting into the morning sun. He actually could have been out of central casting. He smoked three packs of cigarettes a day. Hazel hated smoking at the time.

Victor saw Hazel as an unimportant secretary, a “woman” no less, and took it as an offense that he was assigned to her. Because of my friendship with both of them, I was able to help bridge their misperceptions of each other. As I mentioned earlier, their charge under the Gore-Chernomyrdin commission was to close the deal on the dismantlement

of one third of the Soviet warheads through a program to de-enrich the highly enriched uranium (HEU) of warheads located in non-Russian former-Soviet countries. It amounted to 500 metric tons of HEU. Highly enriched uranium is 90% enriched; commercial grade uranium is about 3% enriched. The proposal was for Russia to de-enrich the HEU to commercial grade and then sell it to the U.S. The de-enrichment of HEU created a massive amount of commercial grade uranium.

Victor was determined to resist the highly enriched uranium deal (HEU) because he was restricted from otherwise selling enriched or mined uranium in the U.S. due to the anti-dumping order. I suggested that perhaps there was a way to trade the dumping order for the HEU deal. We hired a very competent lawyer, Homer Moyer, who came up with a very unique proposal in which the amendment to the anti-dumping order would be suspended and would allow for a two-to-three year program allowing Russian producers of enriched or mined uranium to joint venture with U.S. producers. The program would actually blend their uranium and their prices, thus decreasing very high U.S. prices while increasing Russian prices to the average world price.

The proposal was made and after a year of negotiations, Hazel and Victor closed the deal. Russia got to suspend the amendment to the anti-dumping order and the U.S. was able to dismantle one third of the Soviet warheads. The solution was very innovative and was one where Victor and Hazel had to cooperate in order to find a solution that was initially not supported by U.S. policy makers. There was also a lot of resistance from the sole uranium producer in the U.S., the Enrichment Uranium Corporation, but in the end, Hazel and Victor's collaboration won the policymakers over. Actually the program to set up joint arrangements between Russian and American producers became so popular and helpful to American producers it was recommended to be extended by American companies.

*Q: This was with, you were with Concord from 1993-1995, right?*

GABRIEL: Yes

*Q: During this time, how did you find people with whom the Clinton administration? Were they responsive to business, or was there an anti-business spirit?*

GABRIEL: I felt that Secretary Ruben and other people charged with the concern of the financial and economic wellbeing of our country, not to mention President Clinton himself, were very pro-business. There were some industries or companies that were not in favor of the Clinton administration or that were anti-Clinton to begin with, I would assume based upon policy differences. The record speaks for itself. Low inflation, huge job growth, big budget surpluses and a healthy U.S. economy. Company profits were up during that time, not down.

Some industries supported the president very strongly, like high technology. The coal, oil, nuclear and older hard-line industrial companies for the most part did not.

*Q: How did you get sucked back into the political game, in 1997?*

GABRIEL: That's very personal story, which I would like to share with you.

*Q: You'll have a chance to look at this and edit it.*

GABRIEL: During the years in Lausanne, '95-'97, I kept a diary. I found that our life in Lausanne was very special, and going back and forth between the U.S. and Lausannone month in Lausanne and one month in Washingtowas pretty exotic. It was special, and we lived in an exotic part of the world. We lived north of Lausanne in a little town called Mex, in the foothills of the Jura Mountains. We lived in a 16th-century chateau with beautiful rose gardens, fountains, stables and mature chestnut trees.

In March '96, we took a weekend trip to Morocco, stopping in Casablanca and Marrakech, as part of a weekend retreat for my wife's company. The beauty of Morocco moved me, but also the hustle-bustle of a very different culture was intriguing. I also saw a struggling third world country and the challenges it faced, especially the poverty. I wrote

my experiences in my diary. On March 26, 1996, I described what I had seen and felt and concluded that I needed to do something more meaningful with my life professionally. I thought maybe a job in the administration was right for me now, or the non-profit world, or some other opportunity that gave me more satisfaction and put me closer to making a societal contribution.

About a week later, Ron Brown, the Secretary of Commerce, died. My wife, Buffy, and I happened to be in DC and went to his funeral. The eulogies for Ron Brown were amazing. When Ron died in that plane crash, I believe he was about 50 years old. Various speakers related stories about Ron and the tremendous contributions he made at such a young age. I turned to my wife afterwards and I said, “You know, I don't think when I'm on my deathbed I'll wish I made another dollar, but I will surely wish that I'd done a little more for my country or even skied another mountain, but it won't be to make another buck, I'm sure of that.”

And so the tipping point for me was that funeral. I saw the President at a reception shortly thereafter, and suggested I wanted to work for him. He suggested I talk to White House personnel. It was also the election year, 1996. I had lunch with Patsy Thomasson, deputy White House personnel director, which my good friend Jim Zogby set up. She explained there would be a big transition after the election, and most of the cabinet would change. She asked if I was interested in a position at Energy. Having been moved by my experience in Morocco but also having now lived overseas, where my wife would remain, I suggested that I was more suited for an international position. I lived in Lausanne. I'd worked on the Middle East issues, and more recently, Russian nuclear issues. These topics were the most interesting to me now. I suggested that I could relate to different cultures, and thought that my contribution could be more valuable in this area. Patsy asked if I was interested in becoming an ambassador. I was taken back by the suggestion, as I had not come to the lunch with that in mind. I told her that depending on the opportunity it

would be a great honor to serve my country. Since I had also decided to spend more time in Washington and work full time on the campaign, we decided to visit after the election.

Following the election, a process ensued in which I was asked to propose possible areas of interest for an Ambassadorship. Although I thought I may be most suited for a multilateral position, in the end I was asked to go to Morocco.

I was excited and could only tell my wife. I eventually told my mother-in-law, who passed away shortly thereafter. I relay this story simply to tell you that fate took its course. It was in Morocco that I was moved to reconsider my professional track, and it was to Morocco I would go to serve my country. I was lucky to have been in Morocco prior to the appointment, as I could appreciate what I was getting myself into.

*Q: How would you describe the relationship between Morocco and the United States at that particular time?*

GABRIEL: It was very difficult. There's one major issue that determines Morocco's relationship with every other country in the world, and that's the Western Sahara. Do you know this issue?

*Q: Yes. Polisario..*

GABRIEL: Yes. When I became Ambassador, America was pressuring King Hassan into a very difficult position on the Sahara, suggesting that he was not cooperating on a referendum to determine the status of the territory. King Hassan had given his support years earlier to a referendum to determine the status of the territory. However, King Hassan saw the referendum as a “confirmatory” referendum, one that would occur following a negotiation concerning the governing status of the territory within Moroccan sovereignty, but not including a vote on independence. Also, during the process to qualify voters for the referendum, Morocco expected more inclusive criteria to qualify voters, while the Polisariand Algeriwanted a more restricted definition.

*Q: The Green March and all that.*

GABRIEL: Yes. America was allowing the UN mandate, MINURSO, to be renewed at one-two month intervals only, thus creating frequent press opportunities for the U.S. to criticize Morocco for what it viewed as its lack of cooperation in the process. Every month or two the UN Security Council (UNSC) would rollover the MINURSO mandate, and each time the U.S. would issue statements against Morocco following the rollover. The U.S. was the leader of a so-called “Friends of the Sahara” group in the UN, and would draft the monthly resolutions and subject them to review and comment by the Friends group before submitting them for debate and consideration at the UNSC. It was a virtual pressure point on King Hassan and he didn't appreciate it. As a result the U.S.- Morocco bilateral relationship suffered.

As you know, Morocco was the first country to recognize the U.S. and has the oldest and longest continuous treaty with the U.S. King Hassan had been our friend during the Cold War and his father and forefathers had protected the Jewish citizens of Morocco during WWII. In my first bilateral meeting with King Hassan, he regretted the position of the U.S. towards Morocco and said that my job was going to be very difficult, as the Moroccan people didn't appreciate the U.S. position on the Sahara. After asking him if I could speak candidly, I suggested that I, as a representative of the US in Morocco, would not say anything disparaging about Morocco in public if he gave me time in private to discuss matters candidly. He agreed. Thus began a very good relationship between us, one in which I would meet with him 20 times during the next 18 months, until his death. In this job I learned one most important lesson, one I've repeated several times in this interview: if one cannot develop the trust and confidence of one's interlocutor, one will never be able to find resolution to the most difficult issues between you. This lesson guided my mission in Rabat.

*Q: Sometimes these movements such as the Biafra one and Sandinistas and others gain their adherence within Congress and sometimes in the press of the, what you call the*

*“glitterati,” the Hollywood types and rock stars. The Polisario had some of this, didn't they? Wasn't this a popular cause?*

GABRIEL: Yes, depending on your view of the Polisario, that's right. The Polisario were the darlings of the left wing, viewed almost as Che Guevara types. Later, we would discover that they had infiltrated the Christian right wing evangelical churches as well, and were viewed as a downtrodden people who had been driven from their homeland. Several members of the Congressional Black Caucus view their plight as a colonialist problem, one of the last on the African continent. The Polisario was formed by Che Guevara, Fidel Castro, Algeria, Libya and the Soviet Union.

*Q: How did you deal with this?*

GABRIEL: Well, I started dealing with this issue as Ambassador and it continues to this day... Our team at the Embassy was a remarkable team. I cannot say enough about them.

*Q: Who was that?*

GABRIEL: Maureen Quinn, who became Ambassador to Qatar following her tour with me in Morocco, was our Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM). She managed our operations and provided key political and strategic advice. Our political counselor Bob Holley was likewise phenomenal. Bob was a 20-year plus veteran of the State Department and a helicopter pilot in Vietnam who did two tours and received the Silver Star. Bob is the best political strategist that I've worked with. He could think three steps ahead of any proposed action and predict its outcome. Our economic counselor, Richard Johnson, was not only a highly qualified economist but also a remarkable man. Our Defense attach#, AID director, public affairs director, Agriculture attach# and most all the Foreign Service nationals were among the best I've worked with. Most of our mission tea90% of my senior teachanged the summer after I arrived. That meant I had six months with the old team to get up to speed, get my own sense of direction and be prepared when the new team arrived. I was lucky enough during the four months prior to my departure from Washington to be involved in

the selection process of most of my senior team since I had a chance to be at the State Department about four months before departing to Post. Political ambassadors who are selected from outside of the Washington area do not usually get the chance I did to spend time at the State Department in the months leading up to one's departure.

Getting back to the Sahara, during my first six months, as I was getting my feet on the ground in Morocco and before my senior team arrived, I came to realize that the Embassy had no strategy, no cohesion, and no central mission. The various disciplines or agencies were acting in a function management mode, each with its separate mission and work plan. There was no common purpose at the Embassy with regard to the bilateral relationship with Morocco.

*Q: OK. We'll pick this up the next time the new strategy, also your impression of the king.*

GABRIEL: Both kings. Remember King Hassan died and King Mohammed VI came into power while I served in Morocco.

*Q: Both kings. Both kings and the transition there, and the Moroccan government and the coterie around the king.*

GABRIEL: Exactly. And also, Stu, I'd like to talk to you about my feelings about management and leadership in the State Department.

*Q: Another thing would be the prisoners out in the middle of the desert.*

GABRIEL: That's part of the story.

*Q: That one. Did Israel come in there?*

GABRIEL: Big time. And the peace process.

*Q: And the peace process. Another question I'd like to ask you is that Morocco has a reputation of foreign service of recruiting particularly political ambassadors and gobbling them up and become...*

GABRIEL: Clientitis.

*Q: Clientitis. The political appointees, I think of Dick Parker, have been kicked out because they know too much, something like that.*

GABRIEL: Let's talk about that.

*Q: It is an issue to talk about because...*

GABRIEL: We had career ambassadors that I think blew it. We had ambassadors that were political that went beyond clientitis. They forgot who they were working for.

*Q: I've heard of one US ambassador who...*

GABRIEL: The same one.

*Q: ...our king.*

GABRIEL: I'll tell you two stories about that ambassador.

*Q: OK. Great.*

*Q: Today is the 20th of September 2006. Where do you think we should start? Would you like to talk about the kings or the new policy? We've really just gotten you to the post.*

GABRIEL: I can't remember if we talked about it at all, about the beginning of my mission there or not.

*Q: Let's talk about that. When you went out there... First place, you were there from when to when?*

GABRIEL: I believe I was sworn in as Ambassador on November 21, 1997. I went to post January 25th of '98, and I left post March 1st of 2001.

*Q: Where did Morocco fit in our overall policy? What were American interests in Morocco?*

GABRIEL: I would say that at the State Department Morocco was considered a second-tier country in terms of strategic interest to the U.S. Although there were strong relationships in all fields, they were of bilateral concern to Morocco only, not regional or world-wide, except for the peace process.

*Q: When you say the peace process, could you explain what that meant?*

GABRIEL: The Middle East peace process, the elusive peace process between Israel and Palestine, Syria and Lebanon. As President Clinton prioritized an effort to finalize peace among the remaining states and Israel, certain Arab leaders became very important to us. King Hassan was especially important for several reasons. One, he was a moderate Arab leader who could understand the issues and the needs of the Western world and could represent them well to the Arab world. Secondly, he was the Chairman of the Jerusalem Committee or the Al Quds Committee of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC). As chairman of the Al Quds Committee, he represented the Muslim world on its interests regarding Jerusalem. During the Clinton administration, King Hassan was one of the five most important leaders in the region concerning this issue, along with Jordan, Egypt, Syria and Saudi Arabia. The third reason for the importance of King Hassan in the peace process was due to the very large population of Sephardic Jews who were Moroccan and living in Israel. As I indicated earlier, Moroccans are the second largest ethnic population in Israel after Russians.

At one time, there were 400,000-600,000 Jews living in Morocco. The historic reason for that, of course, was that during the Inquisitions of the 1490s, the remaining Muslims and Jews in Spain left for Morocco, the land of the Moors. The sultans of Morocco have protected Jews ever since and counted Jews among their cabinet members and Palace counselors. The kings of Morocco considered them their subjects along with the Arabs and Berbers who lived in Morocco. There is a long history of close relations between Jews and Moroccans. After the creation of the State of Israel, many Moroccan Jews moved to Israel. Today there are more than 600,000 Jews of Moroccan descent in Israel.

*Q: Can the Moroccan Jews having voluntarily left Morocco, go back and forth.*

GABRIEL: Yes. Many still have family connections in Morocco. There are about 4,000-5,000 Jews in Morocco today. They go back and forth, and often those living in Israel go to Morocco for vacation. The Kings of Morocco have traditionally invited Israeli and Jewish leaders regularly to Morocco to discuss regional matters. There's no issue there between the two countries in terms of a normal dialogue.

*Q: What sort of role did America particularly play in Morocco during the peace process?*

GABRIEL: Whenever we made a move in the peace process, King Hassan was asked to provide his guidance and help. We had developed a close working relationship and I believe the record will show that King Hassan was responsive to our requests during this time. I have fond memories of many stories regarding various issues with the King.

*Q: Sure. Let's hear them.*

GABRIEL: I'll give you one in particular. Before the Wye Accords in November of 1998, an earlier attempt was made in May of '98 to move the parties forward. I was asked to demarche the King.

*Q: 2000?*

GABRIEL: It was May of 1998. Secretary Albright had met with Yasser Arafat in London and believed she had a breakthrough with him. And although Israel had not signed on to this precursor arrangement to Wye (and would not until the “Wye Accords” months later) I was asked to get an immediate endorsement of their agreement from King Hassan and ask him if he would be willing to come to a signing ceremony the following week in Washington.

The King and I met alone, which we often diand I generally preferred it that way, as I felt it created an atmosphere of candor and trust. I presented two requests: one, to support the Arafat agreement with the Secretary, and two, that he come the following week to a ceremony at the White House, assuming the Israelis signed on to the deal. King Hassan didn't hesitate in agreeing to make a public statement in support of the agreement, but resisted the invitation to come to Washington. I tried again and said, “Your Majesty, please allow me to make myself clear. There will not be a signing ceremony unless Israel agrees with it, so all we're asking of Your Majesty is that, if Israel agrees, and there is a signing, and since Arafat has agreed, will you make yourself available?” He replied, “Mr. Ambassador, I will make a public statement tomorrow, but I won't be able to come next week.” I went at him a third time, “Your Majesty, allow me to suggest something. If your schedule will not permit you to travel to Washington, can you send the Crown Prince or the foreign minister to represent you?” Again he replied, “No. Mr. Ambassador, I will make a public statement of endorsement, but I will not be present in Washington.” I started to make one last pass, “Your Majesty...” He interrupted, “Mr. Ambassador...”

*Q: You were putting your hand to say, “Stop.”*

GABRIEL: “Mr. Ambassador, you always make yourself very clear. You're about to ask me a fourth time, but the answer is no. I'm sorry, Mr. Ambassador.” I discovered something about the King in that meeting. I think intuitively he knew that things would unravel the following week and he didn't want to make a commitment to something he might regret. As it turned out, a deal was not forthcoming for several more months and the event in

Washington didn't happen. I believe King Hassan foresaw the consequences and didn't want to be a part of it, other than to support the decision of Yasser Arafat. He seemed to have great vision. The next day by 2 P.M., King Hassan issued a public statement of endorsement of the Arafat-Albright agreement. King Hassan was on the throne for 38 years and it showed in his great vision about issues and their consequences. At the time of his death, he was the second longest living ruler in the world.

*Q: Of Jordan.*

GABRIEL: Yes. Fidel Castro and King Hussein were the longest living leaders in the world until King Hussein's death, at which time King Hassan became the second longest living leader.

Getting back to the meeting with King Hassan. As you know, at State we have a fantastic reporting system which was one of the keys to our success in diplomacy. Whenever I met with King Hassan alone, I would come back to the Embassy and be surrounded by my senior team who were interested in what transpired and more worried that I took good notes. We cabled back immediately to Washington the results of the meeting with the King that day.

Later that day I became somewhat nervous. I had been alone with the King in that meeting and became concerned with all the issues facing the King he may not remember to get to my request in a timely fashion. We needed it the next day, but who would remind him of that? I thought perhaps I should place a call to one of the Royal and provide a written note to the King reminding him of our conversation. Although I initially thought that to be a good idea, I realized that the King would wonder why I was putting our conversation in writing and sending it through a counselor who had not been invited to the meeting. He may not appreciate it.

I remembered that Ahmed Snoussi, the Moroccan ambassador to the UN at the time, was in town, and decided to seek his advice. He indicated that he would be with the King the

next day and would find a way to bring the subject of our meeting up with him. I decided this was the best way to reach the King, since such a dossier would have been a common topic of discussion between Ambassador Snoussi and me.

The next day at 12:15, I got a phone call from Ambassador Snoussi. He addressed me, “Mr. Ambassador”. He was accustomed to calling me Ed, but this time he called me Mr. Ambassador in a certain tone of voice, which immediately made realize he was with the King. He said the King has a question for me. “His Majesty wants to know what time is it in Washington, DC right now?” I responded, “Well, let's see, it's 8:15 in the morning.” He said, “His Majesty has another question for you. “What time do the officials of the State Department come to work?” I replied, “9 A.M” , to which he informed me that the King wanted me to know there will be a public statement issued from Morocco by the time the State Department opens for business. [laughter] This is an example of the ease with which our relationship evolved. Since I arrived I was always given a fair hearing on any subject requested, and never felt unwelcome in my requests, nor matter how difficult the topic, even when I repeated myself four times.

Since we are on the peace process, I'd like to discuss another story that is Morocco-related. As you know, President Clinton made a heroic attempt to find peace. In his final year in office, more specifically August 2000, he convened the Camp David summit, which about two weeks. It was publicized that Prime Minister Barak and President Arafat spent less than 10 minutes directly talking to each other during that time. Arafat was blamed for the failure of Camp David by President Clinton and others, although there are conflicting reports on exactly who was to blame. Shortly thereafter, the second intifada began in September 2000, when Ariel Sharon walked onto the Al Haram el Sharif.

It's not widely publicized that on December 12(?), 2000, Yasser Arafat was secretly invited to Rabat to meet with Dennis Ross, our chief ME peace negotiator. I attended that meeting. Dennis briefed King Mohammed before his meeting with Arafat. I had been in meetings with Arafat before, and I knew some of his team. Dennis laid out a proposition to

Arafat, which you can now read about in Dennis's book, The Missing Peace. He explained to Arafat that we had one final chance in the next six weeks to make peace, and the President would put his entire weight behind one last proposal unless President Arafat was not prepared to make an ultimate compromise. Dennis explained that the question of process was no longer a question of land for peace, but rather trading the “right of return” for most of East Jerusalem. Dennis explained the President's parameters regarding Jerusalem: anything that was Arab in Jerusalem would be under Palestinian control, including the Arab and Catholic quarters. Regarding Al Haram el Sharif, the Temple Mount, an agreement would be sought whereby Palestine would retain sovereignty over the top and Israel would retain sovereignty underneath, including the Western Wall (or Wailing Wall which is part of the Western Wall). However, no excavation could be conducted underneath without the agreement of both parties. West Jerusalem, and everything Israeli, including the Wailing Wall (and its natural extensions) would remain under Israeli sovereignty.

Arafat was clearly pleased by Dennis's proposal. As he saw increasing support and interest, Dennis reminded Arafat that the deal doesn't come without a cost. Arafat must prepare his people for no right of return. Dennis went on to say that language would be carefully drafted to offer five ways to deal with the issue of the right of return, but the bottom line was that the vast majority of the Palestinian people will not be allowed back to Israel. Only in certain humanitarian cases, decided by Israel, would a small number of Palestinians be allowed back into Israel (1-2%). Dennis explained that Arafat could get back about 94-96% of the West Bank. The remaining 4-6% would be comprised of other lands swapped and adjacent to Gaza, with a permanent access road between Gaza and the West Bank. By 3:00 A.M. in the morning Arafat signaled his interest to pursue the parameters described. Dennis was very positive after the meeting, and expressed optimism about Arafat's commitment. He asked me what I thought. Although I was not in the private operative meeting - but was in the other sessions throughout the evening - I saw a real desire on Arafat's face. He expressed satisfaction with the offer, but I also knew

he was known to back down under pressure, and if the other Arab leaders did not back him up he may not come through. I was cautious in my response. We then provided King Mohammed with a complete debrief on Thursday morning, December 14th.

On Saturday, December 23rd the President met with the Palestinian-Israeli negotiators at the White House. He laid out his principles for peace. The plan was five pages long. He read it as a verbal proposal that was a “take it or leave it” deal. He wanted a yes or no by the following Wednesday, December 27th. Those five pages are an addendum in Dennis Ross's book. I was directed on Sunday afternoon, December 24th, to brief King Mohammed and ask him to become actively involved in convincing Arafat to support the proposal. The instructions came via Night Action (NIACT) cable. My wife Buffy and I were in Marrakech for Christmas holiday. The five page parameters paper was delivered to me to read to His Majesty.

*Q: NIACT is a night action, immediate telegram.*

GABRIEL: Right. On Sunday, I requested an urgent meeting with His Majesty, which was granted immediately for the next day, Christmas 2000. I met the King at his Palace in Casablanca. The Foreign Minister was present. The meeting lasted for more than three hours. The King was positive and encouraged by the report and pledged to do all he could to persuade the “parties” to accept this deal. He offered to go beyond a call to Arafat, and said he would request a meeting with Israeli officials to provide them with similar encouragement. Egypt, Jordan and Saudi were also being d#marched with the same cable.

I got a call from both the Palace and from the Foreign Minister on Wednesday the 27th, the day that Israel and the Palestinians were to provide their answers. I was informed that Arafat would not be able to accept the proposal by the given deadline as he needed to consult with this lawyers and the Palestinian parliament. I understood that the King had pressed the matter but was unable to get a commitment from Arafat. Arafat said

he needed until the following Monday. I made it clear that today (Wednesday) was the deadline, and there were no revisions to the agreement that would be accepted. It was explained that the King had pressed the issue very effectively but did not get Arafat's commitment.

Meanwhile, Israel agreed to the principles, along with a list of questions/conditions. I called the White House to inform them of the news, not knowing I was the person who would be breaking the news. I reached Rob Malley. He was more than disappointed by the news and was the first to break the news to his superiors.

The following Friday, December 29, Shimon Peres on behalf of Israel visited King Mohammed at his request. He suggested to the King that the deal fell apart because of Jerusalem and not because of the right of return. He proposed to King Mohammed that Morocco suggest taking Jerusalem off the table and later they would negotiate a special jurisdiction for Jerusalem that would be managed by a multi-person, multi-religious commission, of which King Mohammed could be the chair.

I was called back to Rabat from Ouarzazate, where my wife Buffy and I now were, to get a debrief of this meeting from the Foreign Minister, Mohamed Benaissa. A plane was sent for me. Upon hearing the results of the Peres meeting and being asked if such a compromise was actually realistic, I couldn't believe my ears! I told the Foreign Minister that this couldn't be true, that the Jerusalem issue would have presented a problem for Israel, not the Palestinians. Further, I was under the impression that there were not going to be any revisions to the plan. It was a take-it-or-leave-it proposition and that any changes like this, presented by Morocco, would put them on the wrong side of U.S. and the Palestinians. I told him I would report back to my government and seek clarification. I cabled back to Washington that night, before flying back to Ouarzazate. It turned out I was right. King Mohammed appreciated our advice and clarification and the idea went no further.

Martin Indyk, then the ambassador to Israel, also wrote a cable back to Washington after getting a debriefing from Peres upon his return to Israel. Our two cables were diametrically opposed. Peres denied making such an offer, but the facts do not back Peres' version of the meeting. In his debrief with Martin, Peres inaccurately states that it was King Mohammed's idea and not his.

This led to the final meeting between the President and Arafat on about January 2, 2001, and the results are now a part of the history in this never ending story of trying to find peace in the Middle East.

This example emphasizes the important role Morocco has played in the peace process, and I believe will continue to in the future. Few among the Arab leaders could have picked up the phone and called for a meeting with their Israeli counterpart in such a circumstance. King Mohammed's role as Chairman of the Jerusalem Committee of the OIC, gives him additional legitimacy that others in the Arab world do not possess. The large ethnic Moroccan population in Israel allows King Mohammed to have a unique relationship with the Israeli people. These will be important considerations when the next serious peace effort is pursued.

Morocco also serves as a bridge to the Jewish and Christian communities as well. In the future, it will continue to play a role of bringing together conflicting parties and different cultures and religions.

*Q: Going back to your time there, you say you were going to try a different approach to things that concerned Morocco. What sort of things? How stood the Polisario movement at this time?*

GABRIEL: You want me to talk about management leadership doing business differently, or do you want me to talk about the Sahara next?

*Q: Let's talk about management leadership and then we'll come to the Sahara.*

GABRIEL: OK. I come from a business background, and I have strong ideas on leadership and management. I have never worked for a big bureaucracy, except my two stints with the federal government and am therefore not a proponent of what is called “functional management,” the common way the federal government is structured. I am also trained in strategic planning. Developing strategic plans for our company or for clients when undertaking an assignment is a part of the way we work. That is something that really is not embedded in the thinking of the State Department. At the end of the first summer on the job, right after our senior staff arrived, I had an off-site retreat to develop a one-year strategic plan. We developed the plan through a process called “mind mapping,” which is a process that records fast thinking ideas from all staff and is transcribed on a board in spokes and circles, rather than just working off a flip chart. We actually wallpapered one side of a conference room with flip chart paper. The center of the paper was a circle with the overall goal written in it. From the center circle came spokes to other circles, which were objectives. Around each objective circle were spokes of activities. In a few short hours this process allows you to map out a whole strategy using the thinking of the entire senior personnel. Our center circle (the Mission's goal) became building a stable, prosperous, and democratic Morocco. We believed that a stable, prosperous, democratic Morocco was in the best interest of both the United States and Morocco. It also became our mantra, and signs with this goal were hung around the embassy.

The strategic plan was implemented by three working groups, made up of embassy personnel, foreign service officers and foreign service nationals. Rather than implementing our plan functionalli.e. state department personnel do certain things, AID does certain things, DOD does certain thingwe were now organized in a project matrix. The Prosperity working group had Economic, AID, DOD and the Commercial attach# as members to “deliver” results applying to this working group's activities. The Democracy working group was chaired by our political counselor, and had members including AID, Agriculture,

Public Affairs, etc. It was the team now delivering an Embassy's mission and strategic plan, rather than carrying out functional assignments by agency. In other words, embassy employees were asked to take off their “agency” hat and put on a “Mission-wide, Embassy Rabat” hat. We were very proud when we won the best Embassy strategic plan worldwide for two of the three years I was in office.

Our strategic planning process had to be rectified, however, with the short term needs and requests of Washington. We tried to set up a system that combined not only the short term, immediate requests of headquarters, but also allocated more time for the longer term, bilateral objectives and activities we had defined. Without a long-term goal and view, we would only be waiting on Washington to issue short term work and fire fighting assignments. We would be in a reactive mode rather than a proactive one. We corrected this problem by simply building time into our work week for State Department demarches but, made sure we had a significant amount of time to spend on the long-term strategy and delivery. This process was neatly rolled into and made a living part of the Mission Performance Plan (MPP) process at State.

*Q: Would you explain what that is?*

GABRIEL: The MPP is the process by which each embassy is asked to provide its strategic plan for the year. Most embassies simply saw this as another bureaucratic exercise with its results put on the shelf and never referred to over the course of the year. Our MPP led us to a longer-term implementation of programs and plans, and a longer term vision bilaterally in our relations with Morocco. We flattened the management of the embassy so that we had teams of people working together to solve problems, rather than layers of hierarchy competing with one another, or worse, no one supporting one another. We imposed deliverables and timetables. This allowed us at the end of the year to actually weigh our results against expectations. Examples of our success abound in programs relating to democracy issues, economic and commercial reforms and new military cooperation on security and stability issues.

During this time, Morocco became more of a strategic partner to the U.S. It has a coveted free trade agreement (FTA) with the U.S., and with our support, Morocco has positioned itself as a hub or platform for manufacturing and trade among the U.S., Europe, Africa and the Middle East. The Defense Consultative Committee between our militaries has put Morocco into a privileged strategic alliance with the U.S on regional security and military matters. On the democracy front, Morocco has become the leading country for political and economic reform in the Middle East. Even King Mohammed has recognized that our programs in the fields of democracy have enabled him to expedite his agenda in this regard.

Getting back to the management model, I want to say something about career versus political ambassadors. I happen to believe that there are good and bad eggs in both groupings. I think some of our best ambassadors have been career ambassadors, and I could give you names of people, especially in the Middle East region, like Dan Kurtzer, Ned Walker, David Welch and others that have come through the system. I really admire Frank Wisner, Bob Pelletreau and Tom Pickering, for example. Also, I think, political ambassadors bring new thinking to the department that is badly needed. They not only bring a business sense but also new techniques in management, new leadership thinking, and a results-oriented way of conducting business. I really believe that the American system of mixing the two backgrounds enriches our diplomacy. I believe many of the career employees I've worked with agree. These people would tell you that they had good experiences with political ambassadors. They learned something different. I think the State Department builds some of the best analytical capability, has an unbelievable reporting system and a system for education and training next to none. The Foreign Service officers whom I worked with were an incredible group of people, some of the most competent I've ever worked with. I think we fall short, however, on management and leadership training and we could use some improvements in these areas.

*Q: There are efforts made much more now. Colin Powell, I think, really pushed his military experience. Was there any spill-over into the training back in Washington? Was anybody saying, "These people won the Best Management Award? Let's take a look at what was done."*

GABRIEL: No. I can tell you that being a political ambassador, I had about four or five constituencies that I had to prove my competence to and therefore I had to first get over those hurdles, which took a lot of time. The Office of Policy and Planning did take note however and cited us for our ingenuity in management. The audiences I had to be concerned with included the State Department hierarchy in Washington; congressional committees and members; the King and his cabinet; the Moroccan elite; and the general Moroccan public and media; and, of course, my own employees, both foreign nationals and foreign service.

*Q: How did you find your team there? How did they respond to these?*

GABRIEL: First of all, I was really lucky. The whole team turned over six months after I was there. I came in January. An entire new senior team arrived the following summer. Most importantly, I picked my DCM. I also had a say in picking my political consular and a few others, including our Counsel General of Casablanca. Before I left for Morocco we were able to meet together as a team and discuss our thoughts and goals.

Having said that, I think there's some skepticism towards political ambassadors. You've got to work with both the State and Foreign Service employee constituencies. They are key to your success. Being an Arab-American and a political appointee, I felt I felt had to prove myself more than usual. I think some judged me as "guilty until proven innocent."

*Q: Let me tell you, from my experience it's always a concern when you have an ethnic person in the country. Italy, Greece, I can think of. Other places where somebody is a political appointee gets there and wants essentially to show off. "Look where I am! My*

*parents were dirt poor, I got out of there, and here I am." There's that which means that if they spend a lot of time on that running around doing representation, they're not taken seriously. In fact, fueled with suspicion, and in many cases rightly so because they're not getting a very good report. That's the experience of the State Department with this.*

GABRIEL: That's the challenge I had. Luckily, I'm schooled in public policy. I can't imagine if I were a businessman from Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and all of sudden became an ambassador. I have lived in Washington most of my professional life; I have worked in public policy; I know the Middle East. It turned out that the assignment actually fit me like a glove. I felt strongly that, in spite of possible criticism, I was going to stick to my gut instincts. First and foremost was a strong belief that you must develop trust and confidence with your interlocutor in order to advance your agenda. In spite of the possibility that I may be viewed as being too cozy in my relationship with the Moroccans, I was determined to prove that such bonds gave me the ability to give the tough message later when I needed to, or to extract the help when we needed it. It proved to be true. When the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) wanted Moroccan cooperation to arrest the eventual key witness in the first World Trade Tower bombing, my relationship proved instrumental in overcoming questions of Moroccan due process. Over time, I think we overcame the initial bias one finds as an ethnic or a political ambassador.

There were also plenty of times my staff and the Moroccans witnessed the tough messenger in me. I had several public meetings with ministers where I stood up and threatened to walk out of the room. When we were advocating the free trade agreement with Morocco, I was lectured on how it was only good for the U.S. and would hurt Morocco. I remember in one meeting making myself very clear. I explained that trade with Morocco in one year equals our trade with Canada in one day. I said, "If you think America really cares about your trade, then I've over-emphasized the importance here." I started to stand up. "No, no, no, Mr. Ambassador," came the response of a minister. I had two such events. My staff realized that when you build trust with your friends, you have the luxury to be

tough with them when you need to. Sometimes you can be a best friend to the Moroccans by telling them the truth. But to do that they had to trust your intentions.

*Q: This is probably a good time to bring in what you were hearing about our previous relationships. There were different ones. Some of the political are, and maybe not necessarily political but career.*

[crosstalk]

GABRIEL: I'll give you three examples. Before leaving for Post I met with every living former ambassador to Morocco. I also met with former Secretary of State Jim Baker, who at the time was Personal Envoy for the UN Secretary General on the Western Sahara. The first story involves Dick Parker, the last career ambassador to Morocco, who served during the Carter administration.

Dick frightened me as he pointed out certain pitfalls to avoid. I was so taken with his account of his experience that he gave me a copy of the Morocco chapter of his yet to be published memoirs. His account was somewhat shocking. It started with losing his dog in the residence pool the first week after arriving to Rabat. On top of that, he was the person who had to break the news to King Hassan II that the Shah of Iran, who was a guest of the King's while waiting for permanent clearance to be exiled in the U.S., was no longer welcome to come to the U.S. The news was not well taken by the King. To add insult to injury, President Carter initially cut off badly needed arms to Morocco during its full-fledged war with the Polisario, almost crippling the country to the point where the Polisario was gaining military ground. Having just served in Algeria, Dick was probably under suspicion to begin with, and his style was perceived as too aggressive and somewhat arrogant for the Moroccan diplomatic scene.

*Q: Oh, yes. Dick was a pretty gruff character.*

GABRIEL: For me, this was a lesson in what not to do when going to Post. As a result of the experience, King Hassan requested that Dick be recalled, and from then on Morocco would request a political appointee as Ambassador, preferring someone with more of a presidential view of things, as well as someone more nuanced in conducting diplomacy.

*Q: Another example?*

GABRIEL: Another ambassador who served in Morocco had just the opposite problem. In this case he was a political appointee. I won't mention his name here, but he gave me great advice. I went to visit with him and he had a list of ten things he recommended I do upon arriving to Post. By and large, they were public relations tactics on how to introduce myself to certain constituencies I would be interacting with, such as employees, Moroccan officials, and the diplomatic corps. This ambassador was very big on public relations that created a positive image for the United States. I took to heart many of his suggestions. We never discussed issues or policy process. Dick Parker, on the other hand, was all about issues. This Ambassador was dearly loved in Morocco and achieved a positive relationship with Moroccan constituencies to the benefit of the U.S.

Unfortunately, this ambassador was misunderstood at the State Department and consequently lost his influence on policy mainly because of a mistake involving a significant policy issue, Libya.

*Q: I've heard about this. The Arab states have gone through this UAR. They've done this a couple of times.*

GABRIEL: The ambassador was given an intelligence report, suggesting that Morocco was soon to make a peace deal with Libya, a country we were in conflict with at the time. The ambassador was asked to verify the report with the King. Unfortunately, he was given inexact information which he passed as fact back to Washington, and which denied the Libyan report.

The evidence, however, kept mounting and some time later Washington provided the ambassador with a report that in fact the King and Qadhafi were to meet soon to conclude a deal between them, perhaps on the Algerian-Moroccan border. Again the Ambassador relied on flawed information, which was reported back to Washington. The original intelligence information proved to be true. Hassan II and Qadhafi signed a deal at a time when the Cold War appeared to be moving towards the interests of the U.S., and we did not appreciate any of our allies going around our back to Soviet backed countries.

This taught me a great lesson on the exactness and importance of our reporting and knowing how to critically evaluate information before taking it at face value. The real lesson I learned from studying this ambassador was that you can get too close to a country and lose your perspective, to the point where your reporting is clouded and wrong. This is the opposite of Dick Parker, who assumed the Moroccans were guilty until proven innocent. I learned from these two experiences that I should find a healthy balance between the two styles.

A third example involves a political ambassador who met with King Hassan and suggested a proposal to fix the Sahara problem, on the condition that, if he were to undertake the task, certain royal advisers would have to be excluded from the dossier. Not only were these advisers informed of the comment, but this was the last time this ambassador had an audience with the King. My lesson here was simple. No matter how close your relationship, or how much trust and confidence develops between the two sides, never forget who you are the President's U.S. representative. As an Ambassador to a foreign country, one must always refrain from personally criticizing foreign officials, and in my case, never become more Moroccan than the Moroccans.

Overall, the lesson one can draw from these examples is that there are good and bad political ambassadors and there are good and bad career ambassadors. Extraordinary results in this job will come from the building of a relationship based on trust and

confidence with foreign country officials, and their constituencies, as well as with key American audiences and U.S. policy makers who also judge your performance.

*Q: I wonder if you could give me your impression and compare and contrast or however you want it of Hassan and Mohammed.*

GABRIEL: On an appearance level, their styles were very different. I had a close professional relationship with both Kings. King Hassan was very formal. He would wait until a person was completely finished before talking. He spoke in a single speed and tone, never raising his voice. He always offered me a drink when we sat down. I was so predictable that after a while he would simply tell the server to bring the Ambassador a glass of (the Palace's famous) ginger drink. He had a friendly smile and I learned that he did like an occasional funny story. When I offered one at the beginning of a meeting with him, it would almost always have a positive effect on the tenor of the meeting, and of course made it more relaxing for me.

King Mohammed is more modern and relaxed. He didn't think twice to spar with me over ideas, as he expected a more natural give and take in our conversation. He often laughed and was very polite, but was relatively informal compared to his father. Even if he didn't offer something to drink, as he may have thought the meeting was going to be short, he created an atmosphere where I felt comfortable enough that I would not be inhibited to simply ask for a ginger drink. I would never have thought to do that with his father. Both men were very intelligent and wise. I believe King Mohammed is the most visionary leader in the Arab world.

A somewhat humorous example of their different styles revolves around the King's chair. In each Palace there were chairs reserved, of course, for the King. They were simple and somewhat modern. When we were not seated at a meeting table this chair was more noticeable. In formal meetings with visiting delegations, Hassan II only moved his head and hands when sitting in that chair. The rest of his frame was relatively immobile. I'll

always remember the first time King Mohammed VI met with Secretary Albright, which was the first time I saw him in the chair formerly used by this father.

The meeting was remarkable for many reasons, but I do remember that after Secretary Albright made an in-depth presentation on the issues of the world facing the U.S., the King turned to her to engage her on issues of Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa. I said to myself, “Oh my God, that chair is a swivel chair.” In the 20 meetings with King Hassan, I had not known that many of his chairs were swivel. When King Mohammed swiveled his chair towards her I knew we were in for a different personal style if nothing more. We were soon to realize we were in for a lot more all the way around.

*Q: How did his courtiers treat him?*

GABRIEL: There is still a lot of traditional pomp and circumstance surrounding the King. At all public meetings, there is still the traditional bowing and kissing of his hand by Moroccans. The servants announce loudly when the King is in their sight, so you always know when he's a hallway or meeting room away. You feel the extreme formality when you enter the Palace.

The ceremony to present my credentials was quite impressive. My handler, in full Moroccan dress, came to the Embassy to escort me to the Palace. As my car pulled up to the Palace and I got out, I was met with a full honor guard with arms and music. When I entered the main room of the Palace, I stopped at the entrance until King Hassan acknowledged my presence. I dipped my head slightly and walked forward, halfway across the room I stopped again, until he recognized me a second time, then I walked up to him to present my papers.

*Q: It was a nod.*

GABRIEL: Yes, a respectful dip of the head. I have been taught to respect the culture and dignity of others. I saw this as such, and especially since he was a King. If I were

ambassador to the Vatican, I wouldn't think twice about bowing to the Pope or even kissing his ring, since I'm a Catholic. It's the same thing for the King of Morocco. I will offer the utmost respect to others and show that I do so in a proper manner, no matter who they are.

Before I went to the Palace, I was coached by my DCM at the time and my staff: “Don't touch the King. Present your credentials with both hands and give a slight bow of your head. Don't speak to him unless he speaks to you and then only respond in kind.” The ceremony was on the Moroccan television so they could see me as I presented my credentials.

Well, I was a little more than nervous. I walked up to the King as instructed with no glitches. But when I presented my credentials I handed it to him with one hand and touched him on the arm at the same time and bent over and whispered to him to say I had a message from President Bill Clinton, who I had seen before leaving to Post, and was given a personal message to give the King. I'm told my staff were unhappy. “He's done. He touched the King. He laughed with the King. He'll never be welcome there. What was he thinking?!”

Of course, I was thinking of how to break the ice with the King, and again I was pretty damn nervous, I'm sure. When I spoke to the King, he grinned and asked, “Yes, please tell me.” I gave him the personal message. The King now smiled huge for the cameras and my staff to see. I felt we connected.

*Q: How concentrated on the conversations was King Hassan when you talked to him?*

GABRIEL: In our meetings, King Hassan was totally concentrated on the conversation. I believe he decided that if an ambassador asked him for a meeting, he must have thought through every word he was going to say. He listened as though I had thought through every word and every word had a meaning to him, so I knew I had to be exact. Also, while

he spoke English, he was not as fluent as he was in French and Arabic, and that probably added to his concentration level.

King Hassan took a country in disarray and stabilized and unified it. In the process, he developed strong macroeconomic policies, and began the process of democratization. King Mohammed VI built on his father's legacy, keeping strong macroeconomic policies in place, speeding up economic and political reforms and tackling what his father had not focused on, namely, microeconomic or socio-economic issues of the Moroccan people.

*Q: This is Tape 4, Side 1 with Ed Gabriel.*

GABRIEL: Regarding the socio-economic conditions when King Mohammed took over, health statistics, education policy, housing were all below standards, and there was little or no infrastructure, clean water access or electricity. Early on, King Mohammed became known as the King of the poor. His early focus was on economic empowerment, social and community empowerment. He understands and has empathy for the poor of the country and his policies have evolved into new rights for women and a comprehensive program to eradicate poverty, improving the human rights in his country and reconciling the wrongs of the past.

*Q: Part of the ambassador's role is to figure out where power is in different power centers. Were there economic or religious interests that were around the kings that were influential? The usual thing if you're trying to be nice to the poor people, you may be breaking the landlord's rice bowl or something. What was some of the...*

GABRIEL: This is a tough one. OK. There's what is called in Morocco the Makhzen. Literally, it means the magazine/warehouse where in English times the civil servants would go to get their wages, in military language where the arms are stored.

*Q: Yes. The magazine in the military sense.*

GABRIEL: I think so. The Makhzen was an elite group of people that grew up around the monarch, and other influential figures such as military, police, business, religious. It was a system of rewards to the few so that there was a mutual reason to protect each other's interests, but it is also viewed as a factor of stability in Morocco, because its roots are deeply connected to Moroccan society. The Makhzen's allegiance is to the king and no one else. They remain loyal because the monarch has the material means and political power to make or break anyone.

Under King Hassan, there was a strong Makhzen. This system was detailed in a book, Commander of the Faithful, by John Waterbury. The system has resulted in a very influential and rich elite class in Morocco. Although a middle class is beginning to emerge, Morocco is made up of a concentration of wealth in the top one or two percent of the population, with most of the rest of the country being poor. The per capita income is about $1500.

The system continues today under King Mohammed, although he appears to be breaking the concept of the Makhzen down as he gains more and more control of the country and slowly replaces traditional advisors and influencers with instruments of democracy.

As the King consolidates his power, he is empowering civil society, reining in the powers of the police, enforcing human rights, strengthening the judicial system, empowering women, addressing the social needs of the poor, and reasserting himself as Commander of the Faithful, the only person in the state that can issue religious decrees and opinions. In the process, he's weakening the Makhzen, although old habits are hard to break in Morocco. We have seen examples of police brutality, corruption and the heavy hand of the authorities in political matters. I hope I'm answering your question?

*Q: You know, you are. Sometimes there's problem when you have the coterie, a powerful coterie around, chief of state or a ruler, was our embassy able to... Did they find*

*themselves almost captured by this group, or were they able to get out to other areas, people outside this group?*

GABRIEL: As democratic reform and change came to Morocco, and more people were empowered, the importance of reaching out to the larger society became more important in order to get a more complete understanding of the country and its newly emerging character. In 1998, the most important changes occurred within the political sphere. There was, of course, important economic and commercial interaction with the business community at this time as well. But until this time there was a belief in Morocco that the King, his entourage and some key ministers made the decisions and influenced society. There was therefore no need to have an embassy strategy that addressed civil society, the media, political parties and other vested interests of the political sphere.

In 1998, the opposition government was elected and came into power with King Hassan's blessing. A new era was about to begin and with it a newly defined Morocco. In the Cold War era, our interests with Morocco were measured based upon our military, security and intelligence cooperation and alliances. Beginning in 1998, a new relationship with the U.S. would begin, one marked by supporting the Moroccan democracy model, and its economic and political liberalization.

It also became apparent the Embassy needed to change and to develop a new strategy that identified all key interestour audiencein the country and that reached out to them. Through a single mission strategy we addressed all constituencies that affected the prosperity, democracy and stability of Morocco. They included the media, political parties, civil society, think tanks, academia, ethnic groups and elected local politicians. We continued and deepened the excellent work begun by my predecessor with the business community, which eventually led to a number of liberalizations in the business community, including the free trade agreement with the U.S. in 2004. The strategy worked well and we established an effective bilateral strategy together to build a democratic, prosperous and stable Morocco.

Also, in the religious field, King Mohammed is making change. Let me give you an example. With the Casablanca terrorist bombing on May 16th, 2003, it was discovered that there's an Islamic extremist movement rooted in Wahhabism inside the country within the mosques. The King introduced two sets of reforms. The first came immediately after the attack and focused on restructuring the entire Ministry reorganisation of the Ministry of Islamic Affairs in 2004 and the revision of the legislation governing mosques. The second set was much more comprehensive, affecting imams, mosques, and even Moroccans who live abroad. With these reforms, King Mohammed sent a clear message that he is the Commander of the Faithful and the sole authority when it comes to religious decisions. With these sweeping reforms, he seeks to ensure the promotion of a moderate brand of Islam and to nip radical Islamism in the bud.

*Q: When you were there, was anybody at our embassy taking a look at what was going on in the Islamic schools? The Saudis were subsidizing all over the area...*

GABRIEL: In Morocco...?

*Q: ... in Morocco. I don't know if you called Madrassa or not, but, Islamic schools that were teaching a rather viral form of Wahabi.*

GABRIEL: Until 2003, I don't think anybody realized that some extremist Islamic schools of thought had become entrenched in Morocco. To begin with, I should explain that there are two broad Islamic followings in Morocco. The first is the Party of Justice and Development, sanctioned as an official political party in Morocco, and it goes by the same name as the officially sanctioned party of Turkey. They are a moderate Islamic party, although if you listen closely to them and not to their usual publicity statements, one quickly sees that they do not believe in a secular state. But relatively speaking, they are moderate and have moderated their views and aspirations for the betterment of the country as a whole. There is a more radical group, the Justice and Charity Group, whose spiritual leader is Sheik Yassine. His spokesperson is his daughter Nadia. They are non-violent but radical

in their thinking, and preach an Iranian-type state. Although they are outlawed as an official party in Morocco, they are very vocal and move freely about the country. They are working through peaceful means, mainly propaganda and charity work, to win converts. Under King Hassan II, Sheik Yassine was under house arrest. Under King Mohammed VI, Yassine was free to move about, but given his advanced years, he hasn't been very active in recent times, leaving most of the public interaction to his daughter. In regards to these two movements, our Embassy followed their actions and was in regular contact with both groups, and often reported on their popularity to Washington.

During my time, we didn't appreciate the growing influence of the Saudi-funded Wahabi schools and most of these would later be closed down by Moroccan authorities. Lately, however, it has been discovered that Saudis have funded very modern schools, with full amenities, that are much better equipped than the normal schools of the Moroccan Ministry of Education. Such efforts to create private schools were not unusual, as many wealthy Moroccans also took on that challenge. But when it was discovered that the Saudi-funded schools were preaching a foreign form of Islam, contrary to the common practice of the Moroccans, they were quickly and harshly dealt with. Moderate Islam has been prevalent in Morocco for centuries and is widely accepted by the population at large. This form of Islam is the official version, and the King, as Commander of the Faithful, has endeavored to protect it from corruption by more radical voices.

At the same time, and after my tenure, it was discovered there was an Al Qaeda or violent Islamic presence being exported from Morocco and plotting within Morocco itself. After the May 2003 bombings in Casablanca, Morocco went after these violent radical groups with determination and force, weeding them out one by one. This Al Qaeda influence is a very different element from the political parties described above, and Morocco's continued vigilance has been very successful to date.

The King also instituted programs to take back religion from any fringe groups. As I indicated above, he went as far as to announce his control of the sermons given in the

mosques at Friday prayer. He's instituted a nightly religion program on TV to preach the official, moderate form of Islam, he's ordained women prayer leaders (women versions of an Imam), and he has been more present in all religious ceremonies.

*Q: During the time you were there, was there a dissident leakage into particularly France at the time?*

GABRIEL: What do you mean...?

*Q: These were people who today we're really worried about as being jihadists...terrorists.*

GABRIEL: You mean were there people that we knew of going from Morocco into Europe for terrorist activities?

*Q: Yes. Was France a place where people, maybe they weren't terrorists but potential... In other words...*

GABRIEL: No.

*Q: This wasn't an issue.*

GABRIEL: No. The terrorist bombings in Kenya and Tanzania occurred during the summer of my first year, 1998. Al Qaeda was new to us then and we got up to speed very quickly. In those early years, years while I was ambassador, there did not appear to be any Al Qaeda operatives in Morocco. Only later did we discover home-grown Moroccans joining in branches of Al Qaeda. Another important point to note was that even when Moroccans were beginning to be identified among the terrorists, in 2001 and beyond, they were not Moroccans, but Europeans of Moroccan ancestry. They were born in Europe. For instance, the 20th September 11th bomber, I think his name was Moussaoui, was said to be Moroccan. He was not. I do not even know if he had ever been to Morocco. He was born in France to Moroccan immigrants.

*Q: Was the Moroccan experience, particularly in France, of concern? I watch French TV now, and it's of concern. We're not talking necessarily about terrorism. We're talking about underemployment, being integrated into the community, and all that.*

GABRIEL: These were mainly concerns for Europe during my tenure and we did not have a principal involvement in issues such as illegal migration and the hashish trade to Europe. However, as the U.S. deals with counterterrorism in the Sahel region, we find ourselves much more concerned with these issues. We have recently seen a growing number of terrorist cells in the Sahel, with some elements of Al Qaeda regrouping there. This has now become an American issue. Terrorism is being exported to Europe and beyond. Terrorists are using drug money to support their activities. Economic growth in North Africa is among the worst in the world. And there is no economic or political integration among the countries of the Maghreb. This is now cause for concern for the United States and requires new policy thinking on our part.

Back to your point about integration into Europe and the issue of racisMoroccans often remark about the racism that is prevalent in Europe and admire America for its lack of racism as seen in Europe. Racism in the U.S. is more on a personal level, not on a professional level. Moroccans see this difference and admire us for it, just as they despise Europe for the feeling of being second class in places like France. King Hassan II actually made a remark to this effect once, when he alluded to the differences between Europe and the United States. He felt that Moroccans felt at ease and as immigrants to America, felt like they were part of our country, unlike in France, where they are treated as foreigners who are not welcome.

*Q: Looking at it from their perspective, I think they're quite right. I'm just looking at the time here.*

GABRIEL: We'll need another session?

*Q: We'll do another one, if you don't mind.*

GABRIEL: No problem.

*Q: OK. The subjects we want to talk about...*

GABRIEL: The Sahara.

*Q: Next time we want to talk about the Sahara.*

GABRIEL: Did we cover the political ambassador versus the career?

*Q: Yes. I think we have talked about that. Also, the use of the consulates.*

GABRIEL: That's an interesting one.

*Q: And the business atmosphere. As trade goes, whether Morocco and its relationship particularly to Algeria, and maybe the rest of the Arab world, and the United Nations, too. Maybe there's something else to talk about. Then we'll talk about what you did afterwards, too. Can you think of any other issues you'd like to talk about?*

GABRIEL: I think you've hit the right subjects.

*Q: OK, we'll do that then. Great.*

*Q: OK. Today is October 25, 2006. Ed, let's talk about the Sahara.*

GABRIEL: OK.

*Q: What was the issue, and what were we doing? You were there at what time now?*

GABRIEL: During the time I served as U.S. Ambassador, a significant change occurred in the U.S. policy with regard to the Sahara. Should I give a little bit of a background?

*Q: Please do.GABRIEL: The Western Sahara, as it has become known, is the westernmost edge of the Sahara desert and forms the southern portion of Morocco, about a third of the country. At various stages in its history from 1600 forward, Morocco controlled the Sahara, having taken it from the Portuguese. The Spanish took control of the Sahara in 1884. From the 1600s until the Spanish occupation, Morocco had exerted its sovereignty over the Sahara. Following Spain's occupation of the land in 1884, around 1912, France and Spain further divided the country into territories. As I recall, the northernmost territory, down to the northern region above Fez, was taken by Spain. The middle part of the country was taken over by France, whose reach extended to the Sahara, where again the Spanish exerted control. The middle section of the country included the cities in the front range of the Atlas Mountains, such as Fez, Rabat, Casablanca and Marrakech. Tangier was designated as an "international" city. Morocco remained a "soft" protectorate of Spain and France until 1956, when both countries turned over the northern Spanish and middle French portions of Morocco to the Moroccans. But the Sahara remained in the hands of the Spanish until 1975.*

*Q: The area used to be called Spanish Sahara.*

GABRIEL: Yes, the Spanish Sahara. At the end of Franco's rule in Spain, as he was literally on his death bed, Morocco was struggling to wrestle the land away from Spain and from this newly formed rebel group. At the urging of the UN, Morocco agreed to an International Court of Justice opinion on the rightful ownership of the Sahara. When the opinion came back inconclusivelstating that neither the Polisario nor the Moroccans had real claim to sovereignty, with the court only conceding allegiance to Morocco by some tribes of the Sahara, short of sovereigntKing Hassan II organized a peaceful march to reclaim the Sahara, known as the Green March, in which more than 350,000 people marched to the Sahara and claimed it as Moroccan. Spain quickly signed a peace treaty with Morocco and Mauritaniand eventually Morocco signed an agreement with

Mauritaniturning the land over to Morocco as the “administrator” of the territory. The UN never recognized this action.

During this time, an insurgent group was formed, backed by the Soviet Union and its proxies Algeria, Cuba and Libya, called the Polisario, to pressure Morocco to give up its claim of sovereignty and call for the independence of the Sahara. A war ensued. In the very early years of this conflict, Morocco suffered significant casualties. By about 1980, however, Morocco built a rock and sand berm, north to south, separating the Sahara from the rebels on the other side. This action stabilized the area militarily, until a cease fire was signed in 1991 with the Polisario. There has been no fighting since that time, although the Polisario refused at the time to also live up to the Geneva Convention accords to release the prisoners of war (POWs) that had been held for more than twenty years, some approaching thirty years.

*Q: What was in it? Keeping prisoners is a nuisance.*

GABRIEL: Until a real grassroots effort was started in the United States in 2004, which eventually got Senator McCain's interest, there was not any pressure put on Algeria to force the Polisario to release the POWs. It was the worst form of cruelty. The Polisario decided that they were not going to release the POWs without a deal to have the Sahara turned over to them. It turned out to be a bad decision. In essence, the POWs were being held hostage in exchange for the Polisario getting land, even though at the same time they were agreeing to a referendum to decide the fate of the territory.

Until 2000, both sides to the dispute worked with the UN to organize a referendum to determine the fate of the territory, on whether it should be dependent or remain under the sovereignty of Morocco. An effort was undertaken in the latter 90s to register qualified voters through a process of verifying whether each Saharawi citizen could prove his or her direct lineage to one of the Sahrawi tribes. There was tremendous disagreement between the parties over the criteria, but by about 1998, 80,000 people had been registered. There

were another 200,000 or more remaining on appeal. The Polisario were against the appeals and Morocco wanted them to go forward. All the while, the U.S. was somewhat suspect of the process, as we did not see how a winner-take-all process would settle the animosity in the territories. If the Moroccans were to lose the referendum they would never give up the Sahara anyway, and the UNSC would not force them to. Secretary Jim Baker, the personal envoy of the UN Secretary General, did not see a way out and instead preferred a negotiated settlement, but both parties had refused to abandon the referendum.

Then in early 1999, the U.S. formulated a new policy that suggested to Morocco they grant significant autonomy over the Sahara to the people living there, but under Moroccan sovereignty. This position was signed off by Madeline Albright and brought to the region by Martin Indyk, the Assistant Secretary, in March of 1999. We promised to not support any outcome in the negotiations that did not respect Morocco's sovereignty in the Sahara. We also told them that we could not guarantee such an outcome, but that we would work to ensure that any outcome respected Morocco's sovereignty. King Hassan II was initially cool to it and found it hard to abandon a 20-year position to support a referendum on the fate of the Sahara. Martin explained that there was no guarantee that Morocco could win a referendum, and given the present make up of those qualifying to vote, a positive outcome for Morocco was uncertain. Martin went on to explain that the further the King went down this road the more difficult it would become for us to support such a position. Martin said, “Your Majesty, we are going down a dark tunnel together on this issue and at some point a wedge will be driven between us.” He told the King that a winner-take-all referendum was not in either of our interests. Regardless, the King did not show an immediate interest in this new approach.

I met with King Hassan on July 20 of 1999, three days before he died, the last business meeting he had in his life, for an hour and twenty-five minutes. That's when he informed

me that he was now prepared to change course. I think you will find a little anecdote here interesting.

*Q: Go ahead.*

GABRIEL: King Hassan started the meeting by saying that he now felt the Western Sahara had to be solved with “an African solution, not a Texas solution.” I took that to mean that since Bouteflika had just been elected President of Algeria, he would work directly with him to find a way forward, and that the UN effort, through Secretary Baker, would take a back seat.

He also said something very telling. He went on to relay a story about King Leopold II of Belgium, during WWII. He said that at the time, King Leopold had been a Nazi sympathizer and that the Belgians wanted his head at the end of the war. Leopold said he wasn't afraid of his people and would subject their views to a popular referendum to decide. His prime minister at the time, Spaak, advised him that there could never be a referendum on the Throne. King Hassan went on to tell me that he had finally come to conclude that in Morocco as well, a referendum was probably not the way to solve the Sahara problem. He died three days later, so we will never exactly know what he had in mind. We can only speculate. However, we did find out what the new king thought on this issue some two months later.

*Q: With Algeria.*

GABRIEL: No, more regarding the Sahara issue. Following the last and very moving meeting with King Hassan, I was able to brief the new king, Mohammed VI, on the evolving Sahara policy and the new U.S. position. A series of meetings were quickly set up with the new king, the first being with Secretary Madeleine Albright on September 1, 1999, his first official meeting as King, only forty days after his father's death. By the end of

September, the U.S. reached an understanding with the King for a negotiated settlement that would provide autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty.

The next step was to convey the U.S. position to Secretary Baker and seek his agreement. He had always been for such a negotiated settlement but had been rebuffed in the past by both parties. Baker wanted to hear it for himself from the Moroccans, but otherwise was excited to move in this new direction, which he had agreed with all along. He finally met with King Mohammed in February or March of 2000 and reported back that in fact he was convinced the King was ready for a sovereignty/autonomy solution under “internationally accepted standards.” Baker swiftly moved in this direction. It took Baker until April 2001 before he finally announced what is commonly called Baker I, or the framework agreement, outlining his proposal for an internationally accepted form of Saharan autonomy under Moroccan sovereignty. Morocco quickly accepted the offer to negotiate within this “framework” agreement. The Polisario and Algeria rejected it.

By now, early 2001, the Clinton administration had stepped down and President Bush had taken over, but there was continuity in Baker. Given his Republican credentials, his closeness to the Bush family, and the soon to be appointment of his close prot#g#, Margaret Tutwiler, as U.S. ambassador to Morocco, Baker was now even more in control of the process. The plan under Clinton was to pocket the Moroccan acceptance and then begin a process of encouraging Algeria to come to the table to negotiate within the framework agreement.

Baker met with Bouteflika in November 2001. I thought this was to put pressure on him to accept the framework agreement, but something very different happened. In February of the next year, 2002, Baker went to Rabat to follow up on his Algerian meeting. The King was informed that Bouteflika did not accept the framework agreement and instead Baker was now suggesting a partition of the territory between the parties. I'm sure it was difficult for King Mohammed VI to believe that in less than a year Baker had reversed course. The King had overturned twenty years of his father's policies, at a very vulnerable time in his

new reign, and had taken a chance with the U.S. on a new way forward. Within a year of the deal the rug was being pulled out from under him, or at least that is the way it looked. The King came to a terrible realization. Whereas under Clinton the King of Morocco had enjoyed a strong bilateral relationship on the Sahara, as well as a distinct but coordinated multilateral dialogue, most recently through Jim Baker he was being now relegated to a multilateral relationship only. The new U.S. ambassador, Margaret Tutwiler, came in with a mandate to not deal with the Sahara on a bilateral basis, but instead work through Jim Baker (i.e. the UN only). It was said that even in his briefings on the Sahara as the new Secretary of State, Colin Powell said, “I don't have to worry about this issue. Baker is handling it.”

King Mohammed quickly went to Washington for his first official visit with President Bush in April of 2002. Later that spring, Baker proposed four possible solutions to the Sahara: 1) no action, the UN would cease to be involved; 2) the framework negotiations, which Morocco supported and the Polisario and Algerians refused; 3) a partition of the territory, which no one publicly was admitting to support or endorse; and, 4) a referendum for independence.

These options languished for nearly a year, until Secretary Baker decided to table an ultimatum. He had laid down yet another proposal in April of 2003 known as Baker II, in which the Polisario would be allowed to administer the Sahara and run the territory for five years under an autonomy regime, after which time a referendum choosing autonomy or independence would then be held among all citizens of the region. In August of 2003, due to a fairly negative UN resolution against Morocco, and in a direct discussion with Baker, Morocco was threatened by Baker to accept the new proposal offered or face UN chapter VII sanctions. The King, again, was taken aback by such heavy handed tactics. It was obvious that a bilateral discussion between the US and Morocco on the Sahara was nonexistent and the original agreement with the United States on this issue was

deteriorating. Coincidentally and not due to anything in this regard, Ambassador Tutwiler also resigned and returned to Washington that same month.

In September 2003, a definitive and policy-changing meeting occurred between King Mohammed and President Bush during the United Nations General Assembly meetings. This would finally put on track a serious bilateral discussion between both countries regarding the Sahara and lead to the policy that was publicly announced in April 2008. Between December of 2003 and the following April, Morocco responded to Baker directly on the Baker II proposal but was unable to find a compromise. Baker resigned in April of 2004.

The current policy of the U.S., which is actually the understanding originally stated in 1999, reaffirms that Morocco's April 2007 proposal, granting autonomy to the people of the Sahara, is credible and serious and should form the basis for negotiations between the two parties. It also states that the only solution to the Sahara can be an autonomy/ sovereignty proposal and that independence for the Sahara is not a realistic solution. The UN has tacitly endorsed the Moroccan proposal and four rounds of negotiations have gone on without any progress, as the Polisario refuses to use the autonomy framework for a basis of discussion and instead clings to independence as an option.

The main contention revolves around the concept of self-determination and what constitutes the right of self-determination, which the International Court of Justice insisted on in its 1975 opinion. The Polisario say that self-determination can only be fulfilled with a vote on independence. However, the UN and international legal experts recognize other forms of expressing self-determination, such as elected leaders of a group leading a negotiating team, for example the Polisario. Or, a negotiated settlement that can then be subjected to an up or down, yes or no vote of the Saharawi people. There are many ways to address the issue of the Polisario wanting to find a solution that fulfills the concept of self-determination. One has to wonder, however, whether they are more concerned about a struggle for power.

*Q: Sahrawis being...*

GABRIEL: The indigenous people of the Sahara. In the Hassani dialect of Arabic, Sahrawi means Saharan or from the Sahara. The Sahrawi peoplSaharan peoplshould be consulted in order to fulfill the obligation of self-determination. In preparation for the Moroccan autonomy proposal, the King set up an extensive consultative committee among the 12 major Sahrawi tribes and dozens of sub tribes to get their views of an autonomy proposal before endorsing and proposing such a solution. Ideally, once an autonomy agreement is worked out, the proposal negotiated by the parties could be subjected to a vote, up or down, of the Sahrawi people living in the region.

*Q: It's interesting that we're playing a role. How would you put it? You've got the French and the Spanish have been involved. Were everybody else tainted more or less so we're the SOB's from outside the country. We're more likely to come up with something without... We don't have a particular stake in it, so we're seen as a more neutral observer?*

GABRIEL: I think you really brought up a very important point. There are two tiers of players. In the first tier are the U.S., France and Spain. Those three countries are very important. The next tier is the rest of the Security Council, which includes Great Britain, Russia and China.

*Q: Those are the major players.*

GABRIEL: Yes, and the Security Council is most important in this regard. France has traditionally agreed with Morocco's position on the Sahara and has been its most ardent supporter. Although Spain has privately agreed that a sovereignty/autonomy solution is the most favorable way to deal with this situation, they have enormous ties to the region and carry guilt of abandonment as well. Spain will have to play a quiet but deft role, but their acquiescence of late gives Morocco hope. The U.S. is obviously a key player on the Security Council and can greatly affect any given outcomes. Russia and China seem

to play a quieter role, never tipping their hand on this matter nor wanting to take too aggressive of a role for the UNSC.

My tenure coincided with the first free elections in which the opposition government won and took office. This offered us a great opportunity to shape a new vision with Morocco that was based on building a “democratic, prosperous and stable” Morocco, which was in the interest of both countries. Building on this vision, we were able to redefine the Sahara policy, our economic relations, political and aid reform packages and our military relationship.

It was the beginning of a new “post-Cold War” relationship that began to cast Morocco as a strategic ally of the United States. Egypt would later remark that Morocco was taking on a new strategic anchor in North Africa. The die would be cast for the new, strategic Defense Consultative Committee, a free trade agreement sealed by Ambassador Tutwiler, the Millennium Challenge program, non-NATO ally status and a host of other new strategic policies between the two countries.

I still remember when my political counselor, Bob Holley, and I came back to Washington in January of 1999, to argue for a new Sahara policy. Twenty State Department officials were seated around the table, with Martin Indyk chairing. Two hours later, this group of State Department policy makers had set in motion a policy change that would create a new 21st century relationship with one of our oldest allies, Morocco.

*Q: One of the themes that often runs through our diplomacy, rightly or wrongly, is that there's a tendency of Americans—American diplomacy—to say, “We've got the solution,” and almost an arrogance of power to come in and come up with a solution which usually, if they may be logical to us, but it's not necessarily logical on the ground. Did you feel that there was a bit of this?*

GABRIEL: Somewhat. I was surprised by the amount of demarches that would come in from Washington that I had to deliver, and it was usually a matter of life or death that

Morocco support us. It was expected of me to demarche the Moroccan government and get their agreement with us on a whole host of regional and multilateral issues. I remember thinking that I would no sooner write and be ready to send out a report stating that I got the King's attention on an issue before another demarche arrived on my desk demanding more from the King. It got somewhat embarrassing at times. It seemed like everything was do or die. We didn't consult; we demanded. These were generally associated with the multilateral issues of the U.S. such as the Israeli/Arab peace process or UN resolutions.

On a bilateral front, it was very different and very much a consultative process. Early on in my tenure, we established a three-year strategy to build a democratic, prosperous and stable Morocco. After organizing our Mission around one central vision, we then took it to Moroccan government ministries and asked how we could partner with them in the conduct of this vision. We wanted to know what we could do together that would move us closer to realizing this mutual goal. So it was very much a consultative process, and this process was very much supported by the State Department. In other words, there was a big difference in the way the U.S. conducted its diplomacy between bilateral and multilateral/regional issues.

*Q: Did you get much of a feeling for the Algerian position from our ambassador, our mission to Algeria? Was localitis a problem of their taking one side and you finding yourself being forced into the Morocco side? How did it work?*

GABRIEL: I had a very good relationship with our ambassadors in Algeria and Tunisia and we actually met at least once a year to compare notes and discuss common issueCameron Hume in Algeria and Robin Raphel in Tunisia. Morocco was changing more quickly than the other two countries when I arrived and it was almost too difficult to understand the changes going on in Morocco. Maghreb experts who had been around for decades relied on their past experience and history to assess the Moroccan situation. Yet for the first time in Moroccan history, a free election put the opposition government in power. North African policy experts didn't see at first what was happening in Morocco.

There was great skepticism about whether King Hassan was serious about the democratic experiment. We also missed the fact that King Hassan II was probably aware of his deteriorating health and wanting to make changes before he died.

Most importantly, no one knew really had any understanding of what kind of leader King Mohammed would become. I remember giving a talk about King Mohammed to a packed audience of the Council on Foreign Relations in September 1999 in Washington. Our positive predictions about the King then turned out to be true. He was a man that was going to bring great change and reform to his country. No one however predicted the visionary he is. The Washington policy audience was anxious to know more. I remember that during this time a group of CIA analysts interviewed me for two hours about the new King. The most memorable question asked was, “How long a honeymoon does the King have?” I answered five years or a little more. They thought this was too kind and wondered whether he was up for the job. The King has now been on the throne nearly nine years and the honeymoon isn't over yet. This is due to his keen intellect, vision, and charisma, not to mention the economic, social and political results he has produced.

So Stu, you could say I had clientitis, but if the analysis is right, is it clientitis? I'm sure the State Department was somewhat suspect of me, given that I was a political appointee and an Arab American. I felt I was able to call the tough shots against Morocco when it was necessary, and get the regional and multilateral support from them that my superiors expected, but I wasn't going to be contrarian just to prove my steel to them.

I also learned a lot during that time about how the State Department works. When our policy changed in January of 199the new Sahara policI learned that no matter who was against the position prior, or no matter who trusted our particular views or not, state department employees are superbly trained to fall in line and carry out the mission, at least on the face of it. A new decision was made on the Sahara and signed by the Secretary. Clientitis didn't matter anymore. We were one team with one mission. One of the most interesting personalities I worked with at the time was Deputy Assistant Secretary

Ron Newman, who was not supportive of our change in policy and was probably fairly suspect of me at the same time, but changed immediately when the policy decision was made. He actually became the implementer of the new policy. Ron taught me how to be a great “soldier” in the diplomatic corps as well as the importance of making sure a policy is carried out once decided upon. Until then, I had wrongly assumed that once a secretary approved a policy it was simply carried out. What Ron taught me was that the implementation itself could be much more divisive and that a policy could fail without the right kind of leadership and management. He provided that leadership and management, as well as being a role model for me on how to be a good diplomat.

Ron spent enormous time with his European counterparts building partnerships on our new policy. He was also developing tactics that would involve Moroccan confidence-building measures with the Algerians in order to make them more agreeable to and facilitate their acceptance of our policy changes. One time, Martin Indyk and Ron spent seven hours with President Bouteflika on the issues of Morocco and Algeria. During this time, Morocco was asked to work closely with Algeria on counterterrorism and tightening security along their joint border to prevent the infiltration of criminal elements between the two countries. Needless to say, nothing seemed to work, and the ultimate question, “what does Algeria want in order to fix the Sahara?” went unanswered. The most Martin got out of his seven hours with Bouteflika was that he was “parti-prenant” (an “interested party”) to the Sahara. Great, but what did he want?

The ultimate question on the Sahara will remain whether we have enough leverage with Algeria to ever get them to move in a more constructive manner that would benefit the region and their own people.

*Q: Was there any concern while you were in Morocco that with the generals running things, they had their own terrorist movement?*

GABRIEL: The Algerians?

*Q: I mean Algerians.*

GABRIEL: The Algerian generals.

*Q: ...that they might try to attack Morocco?*

GABRIEL: No. All the intelligence reports at the time seemed to indicate that Algeria was content with using a proxthe Polisarito agitate the Moroccans. The Algerians themselves kept their hands somewhat clean. The Polisario live in Algeria. Algeria also provides them with arms and money and controls their movement. Algeria, however, has not shown an otherwise aggressive military stance against Morocco, but recently there is a great deal of worry about military escalation in the region. Algeria just purchased more than $7 billion worth of arms from Russia in what was Russia's largest post Cold War sale. Morocco is reacting in kind and purchasing a whole new line of F-16 jet fighters from the U.S. The Algerians also kept Moroccan POWs inside Algeria against international law for a number of years.

*Q: Were you able to make any progress on the prisoners of war while you were there?*

GABRIEL: Yes. During my time in Morocco, we were able to free approximately a quarter of the more than 2,000 prisoners of war. Until this time, only hardship cases were freed, such as the sick and dying. King Hassan had a very difficult time dealing with this problem since the POWs were used as a way of somewhat forcing the King into concessions on the Sahara. Every time he suggested they be released, the Algerians would use it as an opportunity to highlight the defeat of Morocco's air force and as leverage on the political situation concerning the Sahara. So every time the humanitarian issue came up, the Polisario and Algeria turned it into a political issue. King Hassan didn't like the Polisario making news out of the release, as they would offer to release a hundred of the POWs from time to time. This was usually due to a payoff by an NGO or an attempt to embarrass King Hassan. We believed the King didn't need to play into these tactics of the Polisario.

At our request, the US Embassy in Algiers demarched the Algerians every chance they got and highlighted the plight of the POWs often. Bigger tranches of POWs were offered every time a U.S. visitor went to Algeria. In the end, nearly 600 POWs got out during my tenure.

But the most fulfilling and emotional result was the release of all remaining POWs in 2004, when an effort we led with the great support of Senator McCain resulted in the Algerians releasing the POWs to Senator Lugar, who led a mission to Algeria to bring them home to Morocco on a U.S. transport plane. The effort to force Algeria, by highlighting the plight of the POWs and otherwise embarrassing them was led by Senator McCain, who obviously had personal interest in this issue. The photos of the return of these men, after twenty five years and more in captivity, still make me cry. My colleague, Bob Holley, at during the time I was Ambassador was the Embassy Political Counselor, and has continued on with me in private practice regarding this issue, is the principal advocate for the release of the POWs and the reason why they came home. Not many people can end their careers knowing they saved the lives of 404 forgotten POWs, who had been imprisoned for more than 25 years. Bob has made a great contribution to our country and to the lives of these prisoners.

*Q: Turning to another facet: What commercial relations with Morocco?*

GABRIEL: During the time I was Ambassador we more than tripled trade, from $250 million to about a billion dollars. Our single biggest success was the sale of an all Boeing flight to Royal Air Maroc (RAM), worth nearly $1.5 billion. Our success over Airbus was unprecedented. We received a letter from the CEO of Boeing congratulating the Embassy for fighting as hard as Boeing to win the contract.

*Q: Airbus is a French-British consortium.*

GABRIEL: Consortium, yes. We were successful in counseling Boeing and working inside with the Moroccan government to have a transparent bidding process, which allowed

Boeing to propose a lease-back option with the jumbo jets, which reduced the cost to RAM, and thus gave them the advantage in the sale.

We also opened up new markets for Moroccan agricultural products, principally exports of tomatoes, for the first time to the U.S. We inaugurated the largest power plant in 1997, just before I came to Post, during the tenure of my predecessor. It was a consortium between a Swiss company, ABB, and CMS Energy, an American company, a $1.5 billion deal.

During my tenure we also negotiated an open skies agreement with Morocco, Morocco's first. We also began the framework process for a free trade agreement.

*Q: How about business people... Was there a problem/role for the small or medium size American firm trying to do business in Morocco? So many countries have obstacles: licensing, bribing, the whole thing. How did they find it?*

GABRIEL: That's a great question. I think the bureaucratic hassle in Morocco is tremendous. What it takes to get a business set up and get a business going in Morocco is a very cumbersome, difficult and archaic process. Let me give you a few statistics and then tell you what they've been doing to improve. When I arrived there, it took seven days for an item to clear customs. It took 24 months on average to set up a business. They had the second highest number of taxes in the world. Not the highest taxes, but the greatest number of them: thirty-seven taxes on a business. We redirected USAID money to assist Morocco in this regard, at their request. The Moroccans brought down customs clearance to three hours; from seven-day clearance to three-hour clearance. It takes a couple of weeks now to set up a business in Morocco, not a couple of years, and the number of taxes have also come down. Morocco, with USAID counseling, has established regional “fast track shops” where a business can get the approvals it needs in quick order.

But petty corruption is still prevalent. You will find things like the police taking money to let you out of a ticket. Of course, you are happy to offer it so you can simply move on. If you want to get your paperwork off the stack of papers in any number of local government

offices, a small amount of money guarantees it. We haven't seen much change in that area, unfortunately.

On big projects, where competition is involved, there appears to be a completely transparent process. The most famous of these and the earliest was the bidding for the second cell phone license. As a result of a competitive process, Morocco received the second highest per capita fee in the world, next to Austria, over $700 million more than they expected. King Hassan put this money into an investment fund that is still incubating large projects throughout Morocco, the Hassan II Fund.

Another privatization was the Regie des Tabacs, Morocco's state-run tobacco monopoly until June 2003. It was expected to go for $1 billion. Instead, it went for $1.7 billion. The companies delivered their bids at 10 A.M. on a Monday morning. When they walked into the room they were asked to stay. The Minister of Finance walked in and opened the envelopes in front of them and announced the winner. You can't get more transparent than that.

There are continuing complaints, however, on deals that do not have to be competitively bid upon. It seems that those with the best connections continue to get the opportunities to partner on tourism projects and other deals requiring land from the government.

The King is progressive; civil society is flourishing; business is growing as well as the middle class, but the government and the political parties are still weak. The King forms alliances with civil society and business to get things done because they can get things done quicker. But until government and the political parties are strengthened, there will be a continuing problem. The judicial system also needs to be strengthened.

*Q: Did they have the equivalent of French AID or German AID or other groups coming there?*

GABRIEL: Oh, yes. The number one donor in Morocco is the EU. France and Spain, Germany and other Europeans are also big donors. America is the sixth largest donor, although that is changing as the Millennium Challenge Account program comes to Morocco. U.S. aid began to increase again while I was in Morocco, in correlation with the country's post 1998 political and economic reforms. We were able to use high-level visits to bring in aid in the form of wheat subsidy programs, which added nearly $50 million in new programming, up from just $5 million before I came to Morocco.

*Q: The wheat program was PL-480.*

GABRIEL: Yes, PL-480 funds. This program offers free tons of cereals to a country. In turn they can sell it and use the local currency for projects specifically agreed on between the US and the grantee country. We were able offer $50 million a year in PL-480 funds. Also, we reinstituted military aid while I was in Morocco. It started with just $2 million, and it is nearly $20 million now. The new Millennium Challenge Account money will add a huge $700 million to Morocco starting next year (2009). Within the next year, America could become the second or third biggest donor to Morocco.

*Q: What was your impression of the EU efforts?*

GABRIEL: EU efforts were good. Morocco had a very good EU representative there during my time, Lucio Guerrato. The U.S. tended to focus more on business issues and political reforms, while the EU focused more on social issues and government restructuring issues. The real problem is that we don't really work together to come up with country-wide plans. There is a growing movement to coordinate aid money in countries like Morocco, but so far we haven't found the vehicle to do so.

Long-term, there is a real opportunity for Morocco to become an important link among the EU and U.S. through a new Atlantic alliance that positions Morocco as a key open market

for adding value to goods and services to and from the U.S., EU, Africa and the Middle East.

*Q: How did you find as the ambassador using your... How many consular posts did you have?*

GABRIEL: One. We have one Consul General (CG) in Casablanca.

*Q: Rabat and Tangiers had gone by the wayside.*

GABRIEL: That's right.

*Q: How did you find the one in Casablanca?*

GABRIEL: I think I said earlier I was really lucky with the great staff we had. Six months after I arrived, my entire senior team changed. Nabeel Khoury took over as CG. He had served in Morocco before and was politically astute on Morocco. He knew the political weavings of the whole country. As I mentioned earlier, we operated as one mission, not independently as separate functional areas. Everyone at the Embassy had a role to play in Embassy strategy, in addition to their principal job and regardless of their principal role, including Nabeel and his staff of 50 people. Altogether, there were 450 people employed by the Embassy, 100 of which were Americans. With this kind of setup, Nabeel had more than just a regional or functional job. So the Consulate during my time did not act like a regional office. Instead, it was part of an overall mission, although out of convenience some of Nabeel's staff focused on Casablanca-based activities and organizations. I never saw a difference between our employees at the Consulate or Embassy. I saw one, integrated Mission with a common strategy to carry out. I don't know if that answers your question.

*Q: It does. What about our military, the attaches, military aid. How did that... What were we...*

GABRIEL: I really enjoyed the military and spent a lot of time with them. They too were fully integrated into the Mission strategy. I wanted our military personnel to be a part of our overall mission, and part of our team. They jumped right in. As a matter of fact, one of our military personnel chaired one of the three mission working groups, the stability working group. We also had intelligence issues, but even those who were in responsible positions participated in the larger mission's activities.

I had some problems at first organizing like this. Government employees are much more accustomed to functional management, not flat, matrix and project management organizations. For instance, at first Nabeel saw the consulate as a mini embassy, with its own regional competence. But when Nabeel saw he could play in a much larger field he cooperated. The same was true for other areas, including the CIA. In this case, it boiled down to building trust and sharing information with each other, helping each other do a better job.

*Q: I want to be a little careful when we're talking about the CIA. We've gotten a little flack just recently. The CIA, for one thing, they want to.... They're going to think, "We don't want people talking about that the CIA is actually located abroad."*

GABRIEL: I don't quite understand this point but will adhere to whatever you think is best.

*Q: This doesn't pass the ho ho test.*

[crosstalk]

GABRIEL: There are people that are covert in the world and of course I'm not going to talk about that. But there are people that are declared, and our CIA head was declared. I had a meeting with the head of the Near East Bureau at Langley before I left and discussed how we were going to operate together. I got to meet and go out to dinner with the new chief before she came to Post, so we had some initial rapport. She was very good at her job and I respected her. We discovered that if you developed trust and confidence between

the two of you, there would be cooperation. By and large, 80% of the time, we got along. I decided to weigh in on their reporting concerning Morocco, as I felt from time to time their reporting about Morocco was not correct, although once I was dead wrong and they were right. But I never changed one of their reports. Instead, I offered my own additional comments in the reports. I finally set up a team of people I trusted with the chief to meet every week to review CIA reporting. I wanted us to get a better understanding of what we were trying to achieve and how this would, in the end, help our mission. There were times that we bumped heads, and I'm sure I often didn't know what was going on.

The CIA aside, I feel strongly that the mission of the ambassador and the way embassies conduct bilateral affairs needs a total revamping so that long-term strategies can be developed and accomplished. We have to devise a way to give priority to the Mission and the mission of America in any given country, rather than yield to the parochial interests of a particular agency. I think that's going to be a future question for our government. We have a great opportunity at the embassy level to mold the various missions together in a common long-term strategy in a given country. The embassy is a natural funnel through which a multi-disciplined mission can be carried out.

*Q: How did you find the expatriate community there? Morocco has the reputation going way back of remittance men and remittance women from a Western Europe going there to play around with boys and girls in different ways or smoke things.*

[crosstalk]

GABRIEL: ...elicit drugs and sex?

*Q: Elicit and elicit sex of all persuasions.*

GABRIEL: I think just before I arrived to Post, an American was arrested on drug charges. King Hassan released him through the diplomatic efforts of the Embassy. That was before

I was there. During my tenure there, I cannot remember any Americans getting into that kind of trouble. I'll tell you about one issue, however, that was somewhat strange.

A Brit came in on his own yacht with 10,000 Bibles, as he was going to distribute them around the country in defiance of Moroccan law. This should not have been any of our business, since it involved a Brit, except that Senator Brownback decided it was our business.

*Q: From Kansas, I think?*

[crosstalk]

GABRIEL: He decided it was our business and demanded that we press this case with the King to have him released from prison. I went to the British ambassador, Anthony Layden, to see what he was going to do about the situation. Anthony said, “The guy broke the law! We're not going to do anything! He broke the law. He came in here with 10,000 Bibles. He's proselytizing. We're not going to do anything.” I explained I was under pressure to do something. Eventually the British citizen was released. Then the next problem was his yacht. I was asked to get his yacht released from custody. I think we finally got the yacht released. Can you believe we are forced into situations like this? And there are costs for these things. You can only “go to the well” so often with your bilateral partners.

*Q: This is interesting because I've run across this myself. The British attitude is that if somebody is unjustly arrested, they'll go all out, but if somebody breaks the law, well, OK, that's their problem. But we get these congressional pressures. There's nobody back in Washington who's going to tell a senator it's just not worth it.*

GABRIEL: Exactly. But overall, I do not remember many, if any, problems involving American citizens and drugs.

*Q: You're fortunate. Part of the thing was the wonder year of college kids was over. This was during the '50s, 60's.*

[crosstalk]

*Q: This is where you went and got high.*

GABRIEL: I grew up in the 60s, so I know what you are referring to. The issue of hashish in Morocco, which is about a three billion dollar business, is a problem for Europe, not the U.S. Some of the drugs may end up in Canada, but little, if any, ends up in the United States. The issue was therefore not a priority when I was there, although I believe it's changing now, as terrorism is linked to drug trafficking. We were worried more about the trans-shipment of hard drugs like cocaine, but during my time in Morocco this was not a serious situation either.

*Q: Was there any—I don't want to use the term—almost human trafficking through Spain? We're talking about people especially from black Africa*

GABRIEL: This is a phenomenon which has grown in recent years and is a very serious one. Trafficking of all sorts from Africa, through the Sahel, puts tremendous pressure on Morocco because everybody in Africa looks at a map and says, “Oh, my God, there's only an eight-mile stretch of water between Africa/Morocco and Europe/Spain. I'm going up to Morocco.” Migration into and through Morocco is therefore a huge problem.

*Q: It wasn't a particular concern to you at the time.*

GABRIEL: No, but they are now, thanks to King Mohammed. He's brought this issue and other similar issues into the open and is dealing with them forcefully.

*Q: Maybe we've covered pretty much it. If you run a cross anything that we haven't mentioned, you can put it in when you get the transcript. I assume that when Bush II came in that you left. Is that right?*

GABRIEL: Yes. Typically you hand in your resignation when the president is elected. There is then a blanket acceptance of the political resignations. For this administration we were asked to depart March 1, 2001, my birthday.

*Q: You must have felt pretty good about your time there from what you told me. And from your reputation.*

GABRIEL: You know what it's like as you have had the chance yourself. You get a chance to serve your country. There's nothing like it, is there?

*Q: To stand up at a ceremony and there you stand up and they play your Star Spangled Banner or what have you or lay a wreath or just be there.*

GABRIEL: That's right. Pretty marvelous. I got goose bumps every time they played the Star Spangled Banner when I served my country.

*Q: What have you been doing since?*

GABRIEL: When I got out, my wife, Buffy, was still stationed in Lausanne, Switzerland. We had not been together full time in seven years. For three and half I had been in Rabat and for three and half years I had been commuting between Washington and Lausanne, where my wife was Senior Vice President for Corporate Affairs for Philip Morris International. So I moved back into our home in Washington in March of 2001 and she joined me there in October of the same year.

In the process, by that summer, I was pretty much engaged in a new business representing U. S. companies on new business strategies in the Middle East from Morocco

to the Gulf. I picked up clients in high tech, defense, energy, consumer products, and represented companies on various investments opportunities.

*Q: Do you still do that?*

GABRIEL: That's what I do today. In addition, about a year or so ago, the government of Morocco asked me to advise them on U.S. political, cultural and investment matters, and I now represent them as well.

*Q: Looking at it today, how do you project Morocco? How is it doing?*

GABRIEL: I think the glass is half full. You hear a lot of comments that the glass is half empty. When you look on all fronts, King Mohammed is moving in the right direction. Women have more rights today, the press is more open and free, labor laws have been enacted. It's a much more conducive environment for private sector investment and building a middle class. Unemployment rates are coming down. Literacy is improving. The infrastructure's developing. Tourism is booming. GDP is growing. It seems like a lot of things are coming together. The question is whether it is happening fast enough. I don't think there's a better visionary than King Mohammed VI in the Middle East. There are a number of countries with more resources, but for a man with a poor country having to take on enormous problems with little resources, and bring his country into the developed world, and make it more democratic along the way, he is doing a remarkable job. In one of his most recent speeches he underscored the importance of democracy, saying, “There's no turning back for us. We've made our decision to become more democratic.” At the same time, he has to balance such reform with the threat that radicalism in his country will take advantage of such new freedoms and reforms. Instability and the potential for violence are a very real threat in Morocco.

I think that macroeconomic policy is strong. I think political reforms are remarkable. I think the King is going in the right direction on micro and social reforms, but here is where he has his biggest challenge: legal reforms and a stronger judiciary. Morocco has built a

strong civil society, a very engaged business elite, and an open, free and competitive society. The government, however, is weak, as are the political parties, the judiciary and the parliament. These are the challenges for the King in the future. Of all the countries in the Middle East, most people believe Morocco is the model of the future.

*Q: ??? of the Arab world, the Islamic world. It stands up.*

GABRIEL: It really does. If it had more resources, it would be unstoppable. On democratic reform, it's the best. In terms of economic changes, it's among the best. In terms of social problems, they're huge, but the King is thinking correctly on how to solve them.

*Q: They don't seem to have the problems of population.*

[crosstalk]

*Q: Actually, Saudi Arabia. There are no resources in Saudi Arabia other than oil, and their population is growing so fast the per capita income has been dropping.*

GABRIEL: I think the Moroccan population growth rate is just about 2% or less.

*Q: It's all right.*

GABRIEL: It's all right.

*Q: Compared to some of these other places. Okay Ed, I think this is a good place to stop.*

End of interview